This month's full ballet guide

Dance and Dancers

AUGUST 1956

2s

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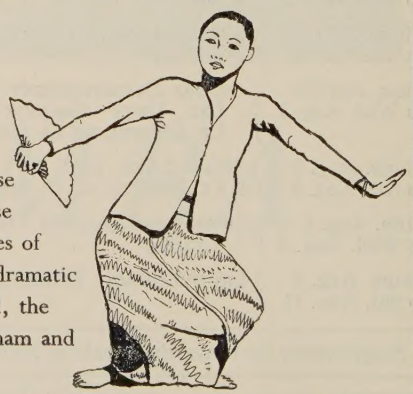
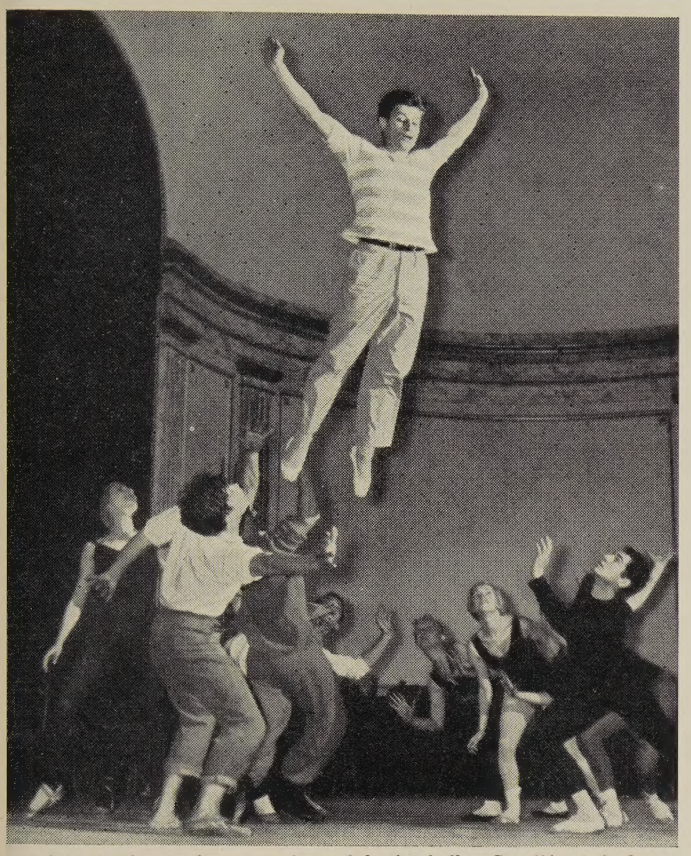


NELSON 42*s*

Personality of the month



Babilée in the air during a rehearsal for his ballet, Caméléopard, *first given on the opening night of his company—Les Ballet Jean Babilée. Photo: Lido*

Jean Babilée

"ENFANT terrible" he has been called and enfant terrible of the dance he will no doubt remain. Every art needs such people, and it is mainly Paris that supplies them. Babilée—whose real name is Jean Gutman—was born in Paris and there he first studied—at the ballet school of the Opéra, with Volinine, Kniaseff and Richaux among other teachers. During the war he served in the French Resistance movement, and when peacecame he was the principal male dancer of the newly-formed Ballets des Champs-Elysées. Even though he has danced with other companies in France, America and Italy, it is in Paris where his art really belongs.

It has been written that if Babilée does not feel like it he can give a bad performance, and this is no doubt true. On the other hand, when he gives a good performance he dances like a god or a devil, whichever the occasion demands, and he can be like no other dancer we have ever seen. Possibly if he were more disciplined, he would be the greatest dancer in the world, though it is also true that discipline might somewhat dim the aura which surrounds him.

Babilée is blessed with the perfect dancer's body, its only fault being that he needs a few extra inches in height to make him a good partner. He is moulded like an athlete, without an ounce of superfluous flesh and with no muscle over-developed. He has a compelling, brooding personality which lights up magically when he smiles. Together with his strong virility, he has a grace that can only be attained by the greatest male dancers, athletes, or the best breed of tigers.

He is also a choreographer of note and has created *L'Armour et son Amour* and *Tyl Eulenspiegel* for Les Ballets des Champs-Elysées and *Balance à Trois* for a festival in Monte Carlo. This latter work has gone into the repertoire of Babilée's new company—Les Ballets Jean Babilée—which made its debut at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées on June 19. This season will be reviewed in full in the September DANCE AND DANCERS.

There is no doubt that Babilée is one of the outstanding dance personalities of our time. His private life and his life in the theatre are surrounded by stories and incidents such as go to make legends for the future. If he never danced another step or created another ballet he would still have provided one of the liveliest pages in the history of the dance—we hope he will go on to provide many more.

August 1956 Vol. 7 No. 8

Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS
Assistant Editor: CLIVE A. BARNES
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Karsavina's "Unalterable Law"

MARGOT FONTEYN is once reported as having said that she regards anything told her by Tamara Karsavina as an unalterable law. Fonteyn thus endorsed my own feelings about any utterance, on almost any subject, from the great Russian ballerina who was one of the prize jewels in the crown of Serge Diaghilev. Karsavina recently defined the principles upon which all dancers should base their art, when she was addressing the Federation of Russian Classical Ballet at their annual congress in London.

In referring to the beginning and development of Russian ballet, Karsavina said: "You (meaning the Federation) have adopted the principles; the point is, why should you not go as far, if you keep your devotion? What are the first principles? They are love of art, absolute dedication and respect of tradition —the tradition you are taught now. And you would ask me what is tradition. I would say it is what many people have tried and found the best, and then put away what was not good. Tradition is the foundation; when you build on it you have progress. You cannot build without tradition. If you pull out the foundation, then the whole building collapses."

Respect for Tradition

I wonder how many dancers today can say with complete honesty that in their life they conform to all the principles which Tamara Karsavina mentioned. How many can say that they are in ballet because they love the art and not because they hope to make a good thing out of it or merely wish to satisfy their personal vanity by appearing for their brief hour upon the stage? How many can say that they are wholly dedicated to their art and that personal affairs and greed for monetary reward does not come first? Do all dancers respect and understand the great tradition upon which the art they serve has been built up? The answer is that there is a large number of dancers in the world who do respect these principals. A far greater number, alas, do not.

Since the war innumerable people have come to ballet because they had the mistaken idea that it was one of the simpler ways of attaining fame and fortune. Disillusionment ultimately set in because these same people found that hard work, drudgery and possible poverty were all that resulted. Therefore I would say to all dancers and would-be dancers that they should mark, learn by heart and inwardly digest the words of Karsavina, for they are, as Fonteyn has so rightly said—an unalterable law.

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Les Deux Errants

Specially photographed by Ken Ross-Mackenzie

Belinda Wright surrounded by the *corps de ballet* in a scene from Wolfgang Brunner's first ballet, originally created in Monte Carlo (see the March, 1956, issue of DANCE AND DANCERS). This work will have its first performance in London by Festival Ballet at the Festival Hall on July 30.

This ballet combines the work of two other artists, besides Wolfgang Brunner, new to England—the music of Bill Russo and the designing of Dan Snyder.

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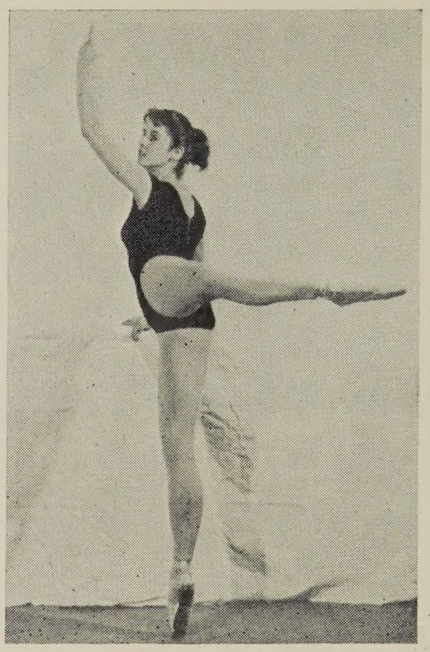
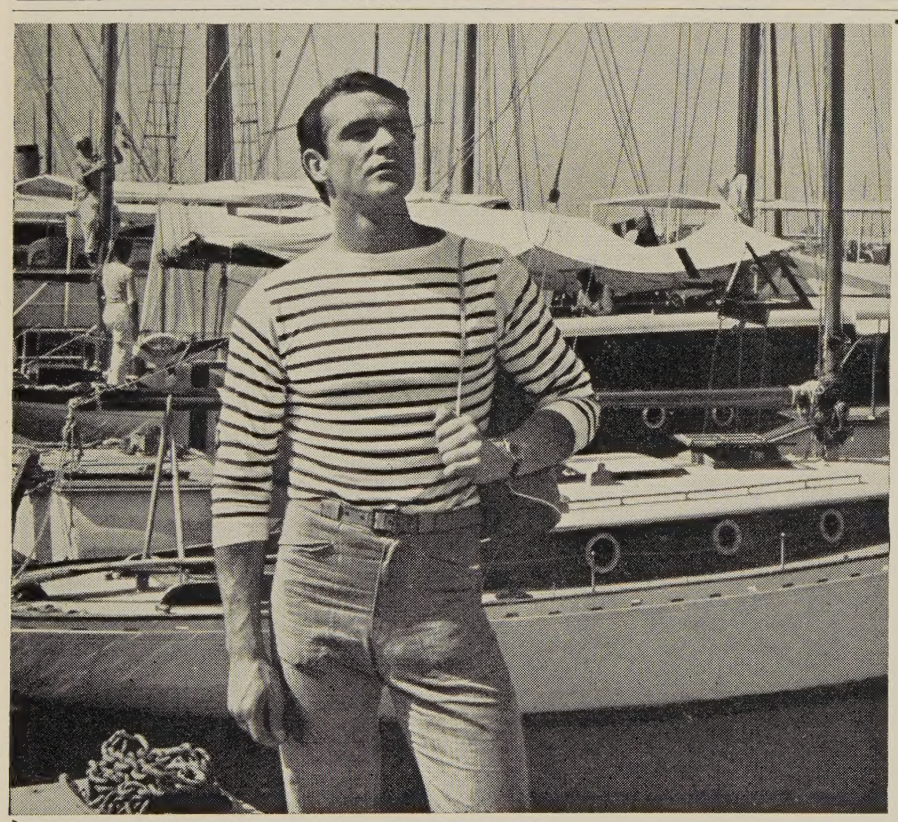


DOROTHEA MULLER, a business girl in her second year of training with Stella Karin *Photo Douglas Elston*



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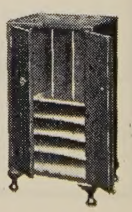


Baltic Rendezvous

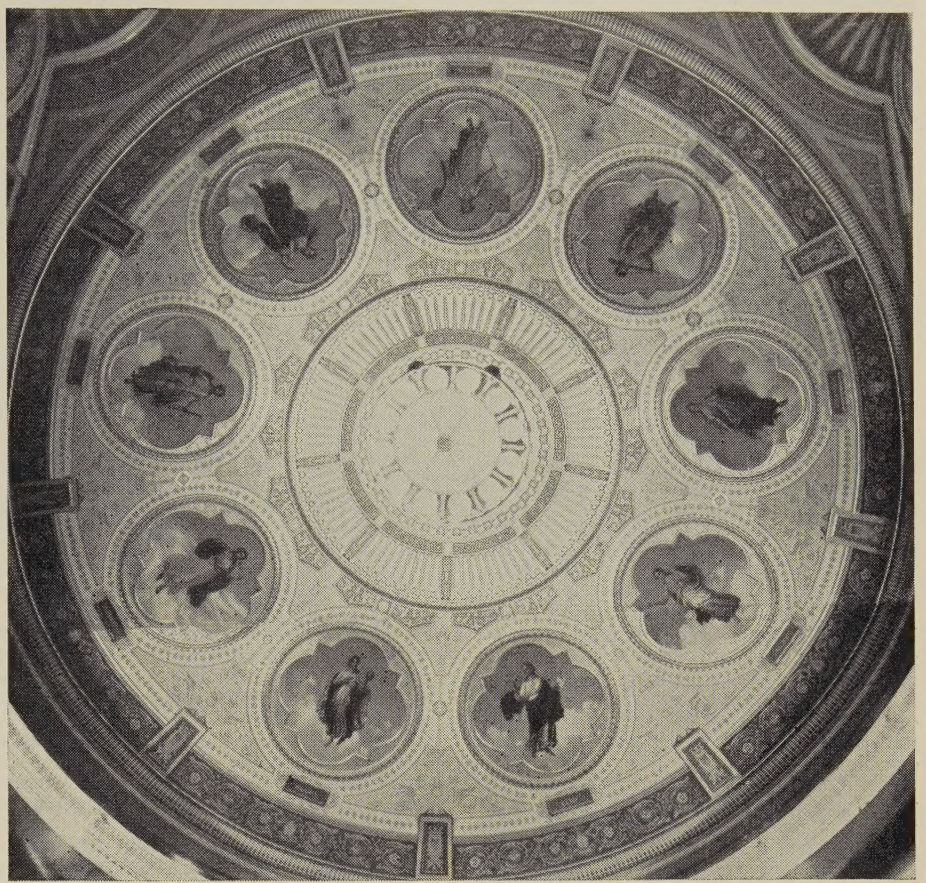
The Royal Danish Ballet's Sixth Annual Festival at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen

by PETER WILLIAMS

AS the end of May approaches each year the thoughts of those interested in ballet start, in the words of a Fitzpatrick travel film, to turn northwards towards the midnight sun, to the green copper spires of the city of Hans Andersen, where the waters of the Baltic flow though streets untouched by time, to—Copenhagen. Here for the past six years the Royal Danish Ballet has been holding its annual festival, when it is possible to see some of the treasures of the oldest ballet repertory in existence, almost equally untouched by time.

This year's festival, running through from May 17 to 31, was more or less a public dress rehearsal for the company's forthcoming American tour in the autumn. As a result Americans predominated among foreign visitors, though England did not show up too badly with a strong contingent from the regular members of the Covent Garden gallery. Following the Royal Danish Ballet's usual procedure of careful preparation for any foreign tour, the foremost New York critics were invited to give advice on the suitability of the repertoire for the American public—a wise move which other countries might well imitate.

Deadlines make it impossible for busy editors to be away from England for the full duration of the festival, but in seven performances I saw enough to show me how the company is shaping these days.



PAINTED CEILING: If you sit in the stalls of the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen and look up—this is what you see. *Photo: H. J. Mydtskov*

Ballerinas burlesqued

When writing about last year's festival I bemoaned the fact that the Bournonville repertoire was in none too good a condition. Now I am happy to say that the company again seems to be acquiring the style and perfection that the works of their greatest choreographer demand. True I saw only *Far From Denmark* (reviewed in full on pages 12–14) and a magnificent *La Sylphide*, but reliable sources informed me that *Napoli* was also better than it has been for many years.

The other novelties of this year's festival included Dolin's version of *Pas de Quatre*, a new production of Jerome Robbins' *Fanfare* (reviewed in full on page 11) and new designs and production for Emilie Walbom's *Dream Pictures*.

Pas de Quatre had Margrethe Schanne as Taglioni, Ruth Andersen as Grisi, Elisabeth Envoldsen as Grahn and Inge Sand as Cerrito. It should be remembered that his divertissement to Pugni music was originally created for the four greatest ballerinas of the Romantic era. It was, I imagine, a perfectly serious occasion when each of the ballerinas were given dances to suit their respective qualities. Except at rare performances today, the ballet is seldom given with an all-ballerina cast, therefore much of the point of such an evocation vanishes. Instead, we are regaled with a burlesque something in the style of Tudor's *Gala Performance*; where an audience should be enchanted it seems that they must rock in their seats with helpless laughter, or that is what they did in Copenhagen. Every ounce of humour that could be wrung out at the expense of 19th-century ballerina behaviour, was wrung. One is always delighted for people to enjoy themselves, but it seems a pity that they have to do so at the expense of great names. Whether this is what Dolin intended when he mounted the work in Copenhagen, I would not know but I cannot remember any such over-done burlesque when I saw Markova, Danilova, Krassovska and Slavenska dancing this ballet.

Nevertheless, Schanne brought all the right period style to her interpretation of Taglioni, and her elevation was prodigious, at times she seemed almost to defy the laws of gravity. She has many of Markova's qualities, which means that she danced with a faint underlying humour without resorting to pure farce. The other three lacked this approach, though they, too, were notable for the elevation one expects from members of the Royal Danish Ballet.

As the other two novelties—the revivals of Bournonville's *Far From Denmark* and Robbins' *Fanfare*—are reviewed elsewhere in this issue, I will turn to the production of Walbom's *Dream Pictures*.

Danish Harlequinade

This work on a Romantic Commedia dell'-Arte theme has a certain affinity with Fokine's *Carnaval* without having any of the master's invention or his simplicity only possessed by genius. Its principal asset is that it has a real Danish air and it uses generously the charming music of H. C. Lumbye who, in the last century wrote delightful light music for the Tivoli Gardens. It is Tivoli that now provides the environment for this ballet. A designer, un-named in the programme, has created a front-cloth on which it is possible to see all the principal features of that unique amusement park. Unfortunately the first impact that this front-cloth creates wears thin as the introductory music continues for far too long—it would be almost possible to make another ballet out of the music used.

Sitting by the lake in Tivoli, Hans Christian (Stanley Williams) dreams of Amelie (Kirsten Ralov), who is presumably a dancer in the theatre there. The scene changes to the interior of a pavilion and all the characters of a Harliquinade appear. When Hans Christian wakes up, Amelie appears in person and together they go off. It is all a slight but quite justified excuse for a divertissement.

The company dance the ballet with much gusto. Schanne appeared as a dainty, in the best sense of the word, and coquettish Columbine, whiie Borge Ralov danced a splendid Harlequin variation.

The change of locality certainly gives the ballet more point as far as the Danes are concerned and it is a useful work to have in the repertoire, though with the best intentions in the world it could hardly be called a very distinguished work—even if the dancers almost convince one that it is.

A prodigal returns

Erik Bruhn is the Royal Danish Ballet's prodigal son. He spends most of his year away from Denmark, but to date has always returned for the festival. This year he made four appearances with his home company. In the *Nutcracker pas de deux*, with Kirsten Simone, he was disappointing—his back looked soft and his elevation was not as I remember of old. Simone showed a growing surety and poise, and she danced a very good *Sugar Plum Variation*, though she did not seem too happy with her partner in the *pas de deux*. Nor was I impressed with Bruhm's Romeo in Ashton's *Romeo and Juliet*. He did not seem to "feel"

Kirsten Simone *Ruth Andersen* *Mette Mollerup*

RECENTLY APPOINTED SOLODANCERS *Photos: H. J. Mydskov*

the subtleties of the role as did Henning Kronstam, who created it and he seemed a little lost in some of his solos. I put these defects down to the fact that he was obviously tired from his long tours with American Ballet Theatre and that he had not had enough time to rehearse.

Kirsten Petersen has yet to learn to project if she is to make anything of Juliet. She is a good dancer but a role such as this needs so much more. Mona Vangsaa, now happily recovered from an operation which kept her out of the festival, proved when she created Juliet last year that an artist of her experience is quite essential.

But if Bruhn did not shine in the two first works he appeared in, he made more than ample amends in the last two. In America he has gained a great reputation for his Albrecht in *Giselle*, and every word I have read in his praise is fully justified. He gives a performance which can only be described as magnificent. It came as a surprise to discover what a fine actor he is; in his performance all the changing moods of the ballet's first act were reflected in him and the tragedy thus became plausible. He was all that we expect of a Romantic male lead. His interpretation and dancing in the whole ballet are the best I have ever seen, apart from Anton Dolin.

This whole production of *Giselle* has been vastly improved and Margrethe Schanne, in the title role, has also matured. She nearly ruined her whole performance by making her first entrance in a way that I, for one, shall never accept from any ballerina in *Giselle*. She came out of the cottage door and stood on full point waiting for the applause which certainly came and it was a formidable feat of *équilibre*, but it was quite a time before one could forget this ballerina behaviour and concentrate on her interpretation of a village girl who loves a nobleman in disguise. In the second act she was particularly good and again her elevation made it appear as though she scarcely touched the ground.

The production abounds in beautifully mimed passages. How lucky a company is to have artists such as Niels Bjorn Larsen as Hilarion, Lillian Jensen as Bathilde and Gerda Karstens as Bertha!

Bruhn's final performance was as James in *La Sylphide*, given on the last night of the festival. I cannot remember seeing him or Schanne, in the title role, give better performances in this ballet. It almost goes without saying that Karstens was her usual wonderfully horrid Madge.

The remainder of the ballets shown during the festival made a series of well-assorted programmes. Of the two Fokine ballets I saw —*Chopiniana* and *Petrouchka*—the former was not so good as on previous occasions, and the tempi of the Chopin music seemed to have gone rather haywire. Henning Kronstam, as the Poet, danced and partnered excellently, though he looks a little tall beside the rest of the company, and I do not know why he has to lift his partner, in the *Valse pas de deux*, after he has arrived on stage instead of when they are in the wings—the effect of her floating on is thus lost.

The *Petrouchka* was immaculate with Borge Ralov giving a fine and moving performance of the title role and Niels Bjorn Larsen almost stealing the show as the Charlatan.

Taras's revival of Balanchine's *Night Shadow* continues to be almost the finest contemporary work in any repertoire. Kronstam was splendid as the poet in both performances. The Sleepwalker was given by Schanne in one performance, and Kirsten Simone in another. Schanne's is certainly the most complete study of the part, though she should not enter with such speed with her head poked forward too much; Simone had greatly improved on last year. But the whole company give this lovely work with tremendous elegance.

Fredbjorn Bjornsson and Inge Sand have almost made Frantz and Swanilda personal creations in the Danish *Coppelia*, and Larsen's Coppelius is a masterpiece of characterisation. The surprise of this always invigorating production was a brilliant piece of dancing from Verner Andersen in the last-act variation once created specially for Borge Ralov.

The final ballet of the season was Lichine's *Graduation Ball*, a ballet which the Danes give with such obvious pleasure and gusto that I am forced to find it enchanting. I have always disliked it when given by other companies. Owing to an injury Bjornsson was a little off-form as the First Junior Cadet, though all his usual charm was present.

It made a cheerful end to a festival that showed the company dancing as well as I have ever seen it. Our good wishes go with them to America, where it is to be hoped they will dance with all the Danish spirit they can muster.

An appreciation of Gerda Karstens, who retired at the end of this year's festival, appears on page 30.

CONVIVIAL CRITICS: Peter Williams (DANCE AND DANCERS), *Walter Terry* (New York Herald Tribune) *and Svend Kragh-Jacobsen* (Berlingske Tidende) *at the luncheon given by the latter for the foreign critics visiting Copenhagen.*

TWO BALLET MASTERS: Recently appointed Ballet Master, Frank Schaufuss (one from left) with the retiring Ballet Master, Niels Bjorn Larsen (right). Also in the picture are Doris Herring (Dance Magazine critic) *an d VeraVolkova, at the party given back-stage at the Royal Theatre for Gerda Karstens.*

PERCUSSION: Kay Lund, Stanley Williams and Fredbjorn Bjornsson as the percussion section of the orchestra in Fanfare.

TWO TRUMPETS: Poul Klipmann and Ole Fatum as part of the brass section of the orchestra.

Photos: H. J. Mydtskov

Fanfare

First performance of revival by the Royal Danish Ballet on April 29, 1956, at Det Kongelige Teater.

Choreography, Jerome Robbins. Music, Benjamin Britten. Decor and Costumes, Irene Sharaff.

CAST

Woodwind

One piccolo—RUTH ANDERSEN
Two flutes—TOVE GABRIELSEN, SOLVEIG OSTERGAARD NIELSEN
One oboe—ELISABETH ENEVOLDSEN
Two clarinets—INGE SAND, VERNER ANDERSEN
Two bassoons—MOGENS HANSEN, NIELS KEHLET.

Strings

Three first violins—AASE BONDE, VIVEKA SEGERSKOG, KIRSTEN PETERSEN
Three second violins—VIVI THORBERG, INGE THORBERG, ULLA JENSEN
Two violas—ELIN BAUER, FLEMMING BECK
Three 'cellos—KIRSTEN SIMON, METTE MOLLERUP, LIS AMAND
One double bass—SVEND ERIK JENSEN
One harp—MONA HANSEN

Brass

Four horns—FRANTZ KJÆRULFF, JENS BRENAA, ESKE HOLM, TOMMY FRISHOI
Two trumpets—POUL KLIPMANN, OLE FATUM
One tuba—POUL VESSEL
Three trombones—ARNE MELCHERT, PREBEN ANDRUP, TAGE WENDT

Percussion

Three—STANLEY WILLIAMS, FREDBJORN BJORNSSON, KAY LUND

NO music can have been more functional in intention than Benjamin Britten's *The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra.* Written for a documentary film, *Instruments of the Orchestra,* the music presents the various instruments to the audience first singly, then in groups and later combined in a final fugue. A narrator, reading a script by Eric Crozier, provides a running commentary and performs the introductions.

The popularity of the score, which is based on a theme by Purcell, led to the concert hall use of a purely orchestral version in which the narration was omitted, and it was this that Frederick Ashton used in 1955 for his ballet *Variations on a Theme of Purcell.*

Robbins has retained the narration and, unlike Ashton, closely observed the didactic purpose of the score. He has sought to give visual shape to the instrumental sounds and to follow the pattern of the exceptionally clear orchestration.

The ballet, which was created for New York City Ballet, had its first performance in New York on Coronation Night, 1953, when it formed the central part of a special programme given in honour of the occasion. Consequently *Fanfare* had as its secondary objective something of the celebrationary purpose of Ashton's *Homage to the Queen,* which was produced in London on the same night.

The problem of matching in visual terms the individual tone quality and timbre of the orchestral instruments has almost entirely defeated the choreographer. Certainly, in a manner reminiscent of Walt Disney, Robbins has seized upon the comic aspects of certain instruments like the bassoons, double bass and percussion group, and the conception of the trombones and tuba as a drill platoon is amusing and apt, but he has been far less successful with the more sedate members of the orchestral family and the ballet does not really illustrate the composer's guide book to the modern orchestra.

In the simpler task of mirroring in his ground pattern the entries and exits in the score, Robbins has been conscientious but a little dull. The harp strikes up in the orchestra pit and immediately the young lady representing that instrument enters and makes flowing movements to its arpeggios; the first and second violins play in counterpoint and the patterns of the appropriate dance groups move in mimicry.

This punctilious aural-visual association is apparently abandoned partly in the final fugue, the choreography of which is not nearly so interesting musically as the "fugue" in Ashton's otherwise rather unsatisfactory *Variations on a Theme of Purcell.*

In *Fanfare* Robbins shows a far greater indebtedness to Balanchine than is usual in his work. While some of the choreography, including the smooth athleticism of the harp and the inconsequential wit of the percussion trio, has the authentic touch of its creator, a surprising amount of the ballet adds up to little more than the "Balanchine school" choreography produced with monotonous regularity by the old master's imitators.

This kind of neo-classicism is still a novelty in the Danish repertory, and as such serves the company a useful purpose. Nevertheless one cannot help wishing that Robbins had given Copenhagen something more typical of his unique talents.

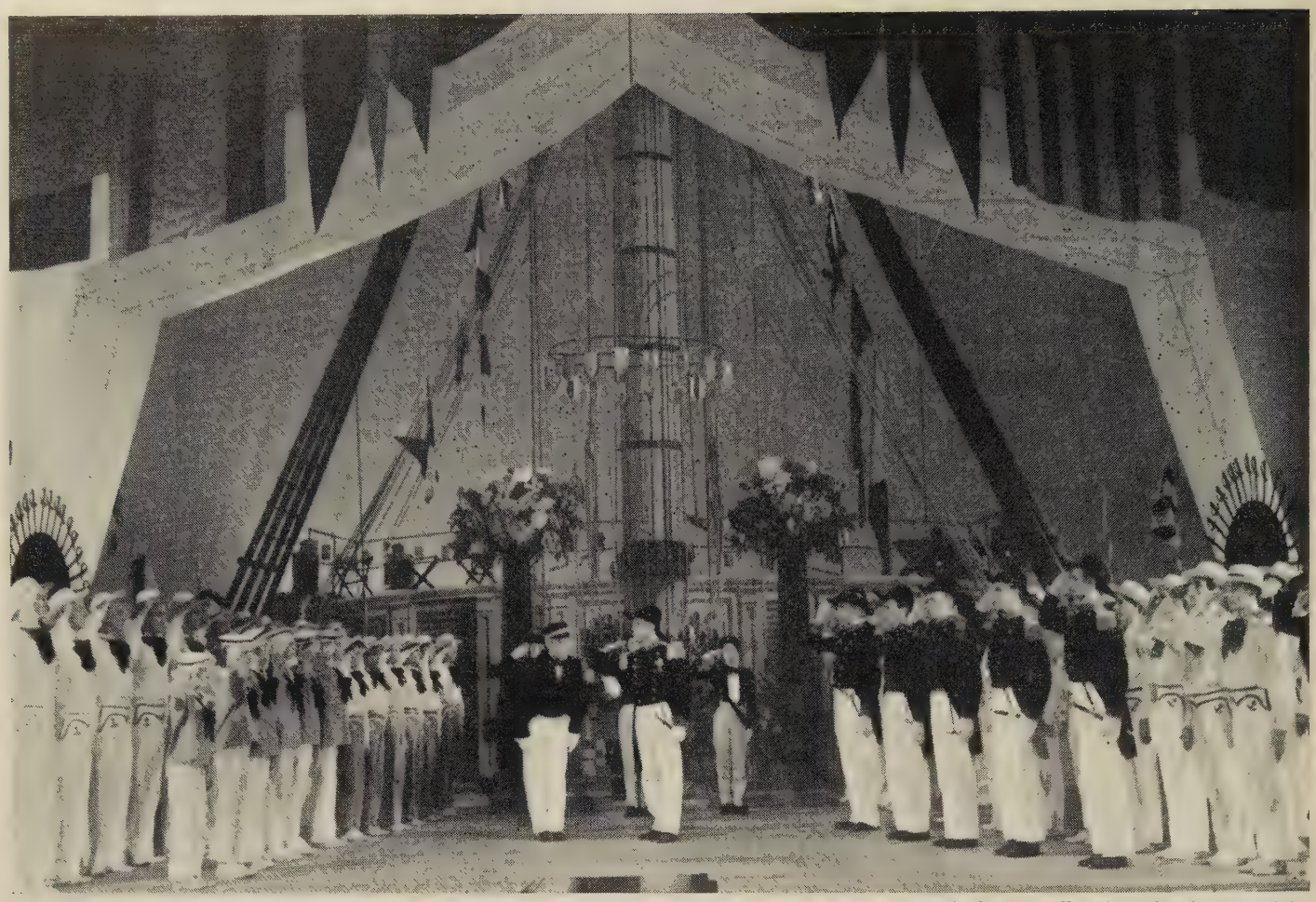
DANCING

TWO years ago I recall seeing in Copenhagen a performance of Balanchine's *Symphony in C* which almost completely missed the right style and spirit of the work. I was conscious of no such disparity between choreography and performance when watching *Fanfare.*

Recently, or so it seems to me, a large number of the dancers have started to become "bi-lingual," retaining the French Bournonville style for their own repertory, but adopting the "Russo-English-American" style for international works. As long as their own national style does not suffer in the process such bilingualism could be a considerable asset to the company.

Although I have not seen City Ballet's production of *Fanfare,* having missed the

(*continued on page 29*)



SPICK AND SPAN: The ship's company line up while the Captain (Paul Vessel, centre) gives orders to his Chief Petty Officer (Svend Erik Jensen, left centre). A scene at the beginning of the second act of Far From Denmark. *Photo: H. J. Mydtskov*

Far from Denmark

First performed by the Royal Danish Ballet at Det Kongelige Teater on April 20, 1860. Recently revived and first given at the 1956 Ballet and Music Festival on May 26, 1956. Choreography, August Bournonville. Production, Niels Bjørn Larsen and Hans Brenaa. Music, J. Glaeser, A. F. Lincke and H. C. Lumbye. Decor, First Act—Ove. Chr. Pedersen, Second Act—W. Gyllich. Costumes, Ove. Chr. Pedersen.

Cast

Fernandez, the Consul OLE PALLE HANSEN
Rosita, his daughter KIRSTEN RALOV
Don Alvarez. her admirer FRANK SCHAUFUSS
Captain of Frigate .. POUL VESSEL
Vilhelm, a Danish Lieutenant STANLEY WILLIAMS
Poul, Edvard (Sea Cadets) METTE MOLLERUP; KIRSTEN PETERSEN
Bosun .. .. ARNE MELCHERT
Chief Petty Officer SVEND ERIK JENSEN
Second-in-Command .. JAN HOLME
Ole, a bargeman .. PREBEN ANDRUP
Jason, Medea (Negro Servants) VERNER ANDERSEN, ELISABETH ENEVOLDSEN
Eskimo Dance .. .. INGE SAND FREDBJØRN BJØRNSSON
Chinese Dance .. METTE MOLLEROP, KIRSTEN PETERSEN, HENNING KRONSTAM, VERNER ANDERSEN, TAGE WENDT
Fandango, led by .. .. KIRSTEN RALOV, FRANK SCHAUFUSS
Red Indian War-Dance, led by ANKEN ØRSKOV

STORY

A DANISH frigate is visiting the Argentine. The Spanish Consul, Fernandez, has a beautiful daughter, Rosita, who has an Argentinian admirer, Don Alvarez. Alvarez views with disgust the growing infatuation for Rosita of Vilhelm, a lieutenant attached to the Danish frigate. Also on shore are two cadets, Poul and Edvard, who also view Vilhelm's infatuation with concern, as it is making him forget his fiancée at home.

The Ship's Bargeman comes to Fernandez' house with letters, but when Vilhelm receives his, lost in admiration for the glamorous Rosita, he does not even bother to read it and gives it to Poul for safe keeping. So far is he forgetful of his fiancée that he removes his engagement ring, so that he can approach his new love with a free hand if not a clear conscience. When he mislays the ring it is picked up by Jason, a Negro servant. Everyone, including the enamoured Vilhelm, disclaims knowledge of the ring, and Rosita attaches it to her fan. On behalf of the Danish Captain, Poul and Edvard invite the Consul, Rosita and Don Alvarez to a costume ball to be held on board the frigate.

The second act takes place on board the boat. The distinguished visitors, among them the Consul and his party, are received by the Captain. The ship's company entertain their guests with dances. During the course of the festivities Rosita, who is suspicious of the ring and wishes to bring the matter to an issue, in a seeming fit of caprice throws her fan overboard. With only a slight hesitation Vilhelm jumps into the sea to recover the fan, to which is still attached his engagement ring.

He succeeds in rescuing the fan and restores it to Rosita, first removing the ring, which he now acknowledges as his own. He reconciles Rosita with the jealous Don Alvarez, and, as evening falls, the visitors return to the shore. Although their guests have left, the crew continue with their merry-making, until the strains of an old Danish song, in honour of the Danish flag, sound towards the ship from the shore. In the midst of their jollity each of the crew thinks of his homeland and family. Poul and Edvard give back to Vilhelm the letter he had that morning so carelessly disregarded. Recovered from his temporary infatuation Vilhelm joins the crew in their thoughts of home.

PRODUCTION

DENMARK'S small but precious repertory of Bournonville ballets is wonderful and unique. It would be idle to imagine that a ballet such as this, now nearly 100 years old, has survived completely unchanged from the days of its first creation. Even with the best will in the world, changes in choreography and production are bound to creep in.

But ballets like *Far from Denmark* (and the complete extant repertory consists of about ten works) have held their place continuously on the stage of the Royal Theatre, and have

been carefully handed down from one generation to the next. Consequently it is safe to assume that certainly in outline and largely in choreographic detail these Bournonville ballets are virtually perfect examples of the Romantic Ballet. The stewardship of these works is Denmark's particular gift to the ballet world.

Far from Denmark or *A Costume Ball on Board* was one of Bournonville's topical ballets dealing with a contemporary subject. Today it is, of course, a period piece; when created it was something like *Fancy Free*.

The original inspiration for the ballet came from the voyage round the world undertaken in 1845-7 by the Danish frigate, Galathea, and later the subject of a book by Steen A. Bille. The scenario is very loosely based on an incident from the book telling of the visit of the Argentine President's daughter, Marmelita, to the frigate when it was lying off Buenos Aires.

The details of 19th-century Danish naval life are, as one would expect from a contemporaneous work, apparently authentic. Svend Kragh-Jacobsen tells me that at that time two of the principal subjects studied at the Danish naval academy were drawing and dancing. This not only explains the costume ball in the second act and shows that it is basically realistic and not a kind of revue extravaganza, but it also gives point to the ballet's opening showing Vilhelm sketching.

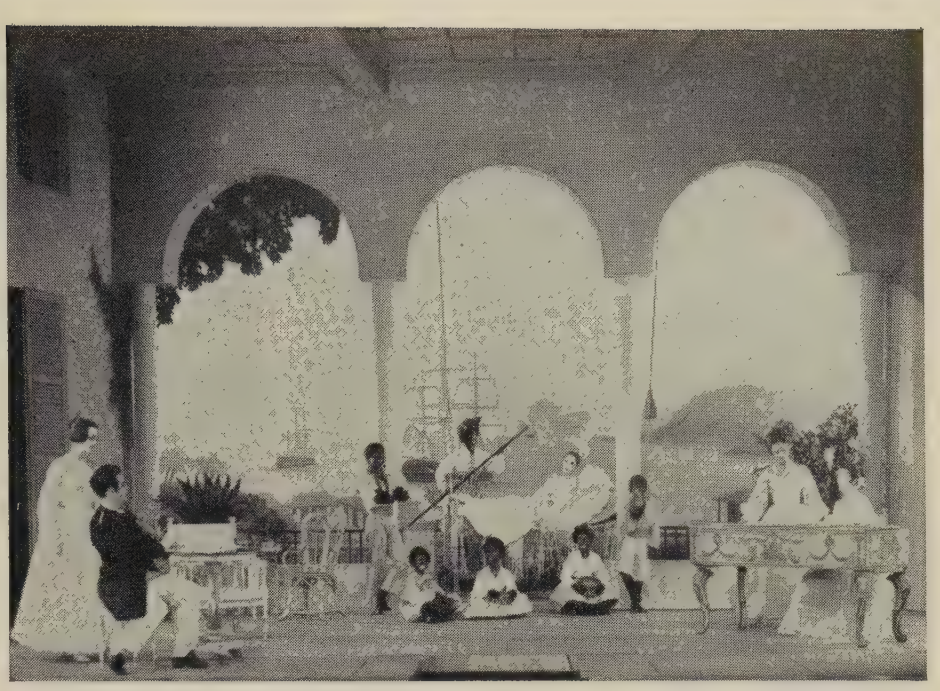
The first act is almost entirely mime. Apart from the Negroes' Dance at the end of the act (which incidentally shows a marked similarity to the Negro dances created for the company 76 years earlier by Galleotti in *The Whims of Cupid*) and a few steps for Alvarez and Rosita and her friends, the entire action of the ballet is entrusted to mime, dancing being restricted almost entirely to the *divertissements*.

This is nothing more than an extreme instance of a tendency to separate mime and dancing that seems characteristic of the choreographer. The mime used is not at all formal and cannot really be compared with the stylised conventional mime that reached such a high stage of development in the Russian ballet of the late 19th century. In Bournonville ballets, at least as they are danced today, all mime tends towards naturalistic gesture used in a very fluid and expressive manner.

Bournonville very rarely avails himself of the kind of expressive dancing one finds in the second act of *Giselle*, although it has been suggested to me that this is partly the fault of his modern interpreters, and that ideally a much stronger dance element should be incorporated into the acting. This is an interesting theory partly borne out by Gerda Karstens' performance of Madge in *La Sylphide* in which she did quite definitely "dance" some of the mime episodes. On the other hand it is difficult to see how the first act of this present ballet could ever have been put over in any other way than that at present employed.

The mime in the second act is as resourceful and as charming as ever. The *divertissement*, which is choreographically as rich as anything even Bournonville produced in this field, is built into the ballet's action in the most natural way possible. Few modern choreographers can equal and none surpasses Bournonville's skill at manipulating his scenario. Whatever modern ballet has gained, it has lost in narrative technique. The *divertissement* itself has an added interest in being, so far as I am aware, the only surviving example by Bournonville of the familiar 19th century fashion (invariably found in Petipa) of bringing together various pseudo-national dances from all over the world.

In the Danish Ballet's very natural and understandable desire to enlarge its national repertoire, and to develop more fully an international dance style appropriate to the foreign works which it includes, it is to be hoped that it will not neglect such old works, for whatever the company's successes in fields far from Denmark, it is to Bournonville that it owes the qualities that should be envied throughout the ballet world.



LAZY AFTERNOON: Rosita (Kirsten Ralov) reclines in a hammock while Vilhelm, a Danish lieutenant (Stanley Williams), paints. The opening moment of the first act of Far From Denmark.

ARGENTINIAN CHARM: Vilhelm (this time played by Henning Kronstam), infatuated by Rosita, is watched by two sea cadets, Paul and Edvard (Inge Sand and Ruth Andersen). These two travesti *roles have been played by many famous Danish dancers.* *Photos: H. J. Mydtskov*

DANCING

NO other company would attempt to produce *Far from Denmark*, and as no other company possibly could, this is just as well. The ballet calls for 20 or more first-rate actors; without them it would be insupportable, with them it is altogether entrancing.

More than almost any other this is a full company ballet in which one role is hardly more important than another. The performance the ballet receives is so consistent that it would be unfair to mention individuals.

CHINESE DANCE: *Inge Sand and Stanley Williams in one of the dances from the divertissement given by the sailors.*

ESKIMO DANCE: *Inge Sand and Fredbjorn in a lively dance involving a number of high-kicks.* *Photos: H. J. Mydtskov*

At the ballet's second performance during the Festival, following the current Danish practice, a number of alternative castings were presented. These included Henning Kronstam as Vilhelm, Margrethe Schanne as Rosita, Inge Sand and Ruth Andersen as the Cadets, Stanley Williams in the Chinese Dance, and Viveka Segerskog and Niels Kehlet in the Eskimo Dance. This was the latter's solo debut; still in his 'teens he looks like another Bjørnsson in the making.

Quite a lot seems to be said these days to the general effect that the younger dancers, although showing to better advantage in the international repertory, are losing the finer points of the Bournonville style. This, if true, would be a potentially dangerous situation. But judging from the dancing in this ballet, it seemed to me that many of the younger dancers, for example Kronstam and Mollerup, are dancing Bournonville as well as ever.

Clive Barnes

DECOR

JUDGING by the old pictures of *Far from Denmark*, the scenery and costumes for this most recent revival are a pretty near reconstruction of the original settings.

The decor for the opening scene, Rosita's patio overlooking the harbour of Buenos Aires, is a most unusual one for ballet. Or rather, unusual for today, because these ballets of the Romantic era invariably open with rather solid-looking interiors (the first act of *La Sylphide* is a typical example), rather similar in fact to 'twenties musical comedies. This setting is full of sunlight and yet it has a cool elegance which makes a perfect background to the rather languorous lives of the ruling classes of the mid-19th century.

The patio overlooks a charming landscape with ships riding at anchor. An amusing touch is when one of the ships, painted on the backcloth, suddenly fires a salute.

From the moment the curtain rises on this scene it is fairly obvious that, from the amount of furniture scattered around and also from the floor-length crinolines of the señoritas, very little actual dancing is going to take place. The only people dressed for dancing are the coloured servants, whose dress and behaviour is strikingly similar to the Negroes in Galeotti's *Caprices du Cupidon*, and they supply the only dancing this act has to offer.

The second act, on board the Danish ship, must be, if it is a faithful copy of the original, the forerunner of all those ship-board scenes such as we have seen in *H.M.S. Pinafore* and *Pineapple Poll*. It is splendidly realised with much more practical nautical detail than is usual in such scenes. The fact that the action takes place in the tropics is an enormous help to the designer because the white awning helps to form the borders and wings which always present a problem in designing open-air settings.

The naval uniforms are presumably authentic and the costumes for the divertissement are very gay, while those for the other female guests are in soft pastel colours.

Particularly charming is the Spanish costumes for Señorita Rosita with its glitter and deep black lace flounces. In this role Kirsten Ralov wore red on one evening while Margrethe Schanne wore deep champagne on the following evening; what were the colours of the original costume I would not know—both were very pretty and looked like the lithographs of Fanny Ellsler in *Le Diable à Boiteux*.

From a designing point of view the production was as delightful an evocation of a period, a hundred years back, as one could wish for. The world has reason to be grateful to the Royal Danish Ballet for keeping these Bournonville works in the spirit of their time by avoiding the temptation to bring them up to date in any way. The result is that they seem more "contemporary' than many works which were only created last year.

Peter Williams

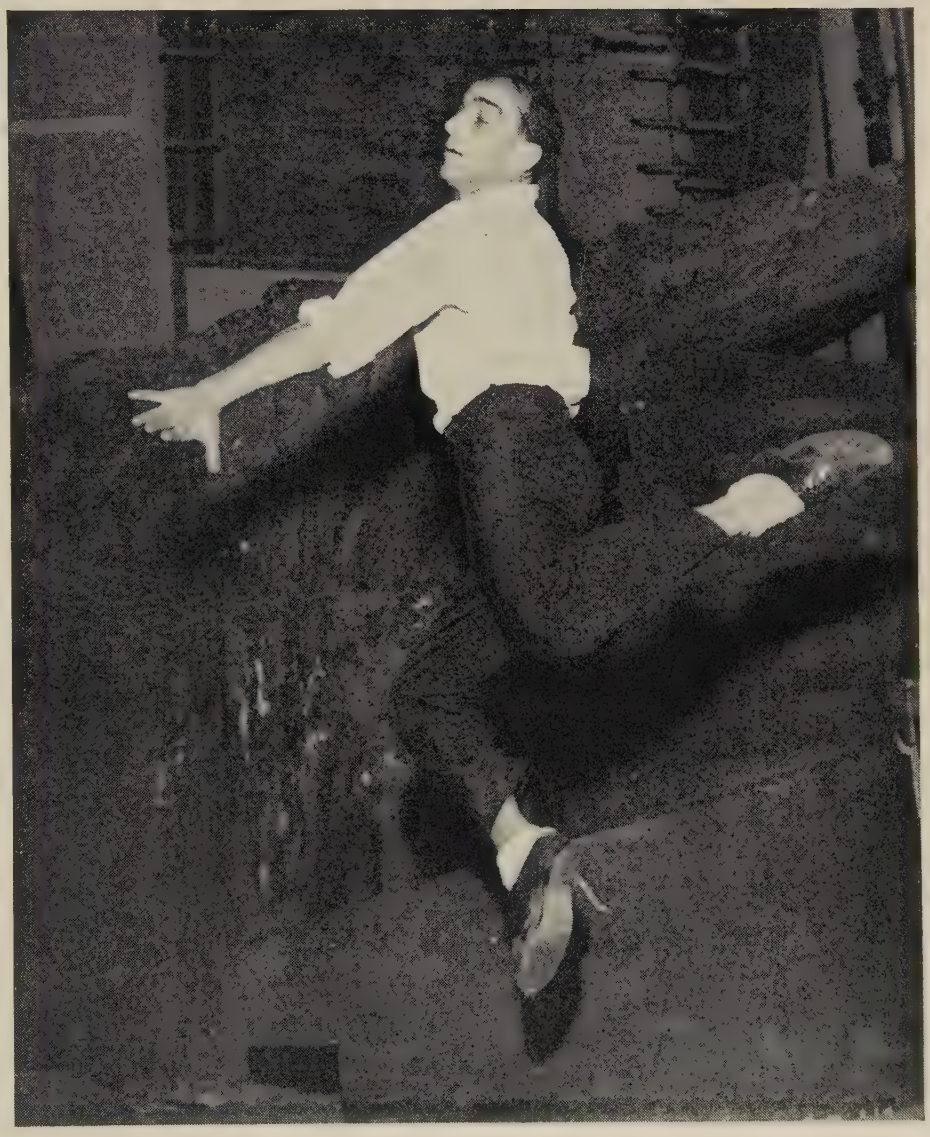
SPANISH DANCE: *Kirsten Ralov, as Rosita, leads Flemming Beck, Olé Fatum, Henning Kronstam and Fredbjorn Bjornsson in a* Fandango. *Photo: H. J. Mydtskov*

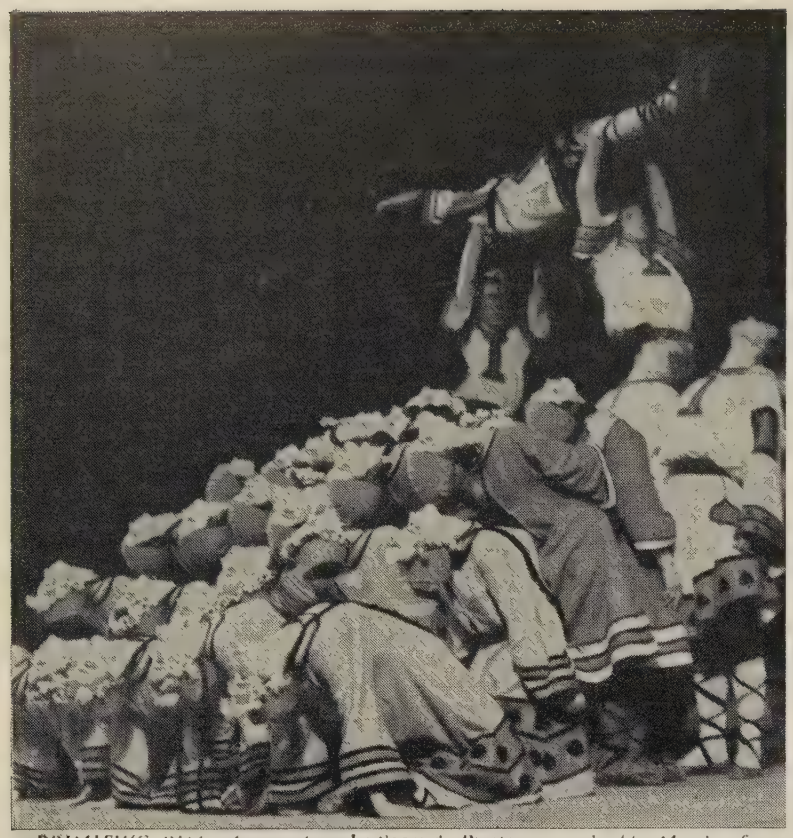
MASSINE REHEARSES in Stockholm

THE famous veteran Russian dancer and choreographer, Leonide Massine, recently revived three of his works—*Le Sacre du Printemps*, *The Three-cornered Hat* and *Gaité Parisienne*—for the Royal Swedish Ballet in Stockholm. The three ballets were given during the Stockholm Festival and are discussed by Clive Barnes on the following pages.

These pictures show the personality and remarkable vitality of Massine today. He is seen rehearsing the Swedish company and also preparing for his own performance.

Photographed by Enar Merkel Rydberg





PRIMITIVE RITE: A group from Le Sacre du Printemps, *revived by Massine for the first time in many years. Photos: Enar Merkel Rydberg*

CHOSEN VIRGIN: Mariane Orlando in the role made famous by Lydia Sokolova.

Massine revivals for Sweden

by CLIVE BARNES

This year's Festival in Stockholm, while being notable for three revivals of Massine ballets—*Le Sacre du Printemps*, *The Three-Cornered Hat* and *Gaîté Parisienne*, was so arranged that it was difficult for visitors with limited time to see any of the other works in the company's repertoire; and, apart from Cullberg's *Medea*, no Swedish creations were shown.

TWO years can be a long time in the life of a ballet company. When I last visited Stockholm in 1954 the Royal Swedish Ballet was at the beginning of a new phase of development, and, returning, I was naturally anxious to see what had been achieved since Mary Skeaping had been appointed full-time Director of the company.

The Stockholm Festival, consisting of concerts, operas and plays, as well as ballet, follows close on the heels of the Copenhagen Music and Ballet Festival. Unfortunately, ballet, quite possibly the biggest draw in any festival, is not given a great deal of prominence, and the programmes on this occasion were not well arranged. The first three programmes were devoted to performances of the company's recent Massine revivals, and right at the end of the Festival was a single performance of Mary Skeaping's production of *Giselle* (with Ellen Rasch and Björn Holmgren) and Birgit Cullberg's ballet *Medea*.

It was probably partly due to this unrepresentative repertory that comparatively few of the ballet critics gathered in Copenhagen made the journey up to Stockholm. Until Stockholm pays more attention to its programme planning it will not be able to attract the great number of foreign ballet critics that Copenhagen now rightly accepts as its due.

Two years ago, seeing the company in *Swan Lake* and two Cullberg ballets, I was surprised at how much had been achieved. Now, although I would have welcomed the opportunity of seeing their *Sleeping Beauty* or *Giselle* it is obvious that the company has developed still further. The Massine ballets have extended the company's range and, I suspect, re-vitalised some of their dancers, having much the same effect that the Massine works had at Covent Garden in 1947, although the company is still perhaps not yet quite at the Wells' level of that time.

For the future it is possible that Massine (who, incidentally, also danced with the company) will return to mount some more works, presumably Cullberg, and possibly other Swedish choreographers, will continue to add to the national repertory, and Skeaping is, this autumn, to complete the classical "canon" by the revival of *Coppelia*, a production that will be intended to give some of the younger members of the company an opportunity to shine.

The company has already started to tour abroad (immediately after the Festival it left for appearances in Italy) and the time cannot be far distant when it will be in a position to act as Sweden's cultural ambassador—which after all nowadays seems to be the primary function of all national ballets. There are, however, three things still to be achieved before the Swedish Ballet is ready to take its place among the great international national companies.

The first point I have no wish to labour too strongly, as already the position seems to have improved since 1954, but although the company is strong at the top and highly promising at the bottom, like many other State companies, it looks as though there is an element of pension-serving in the middle ranks.

The two other points are possibly related problems. The first involves the repertory, and that means money and time, but it does seem as though the repertory needs extending and widening. At the present time a lot of the company's energies are taken up by appearing in the operas, and one wonders whether the Theatre Directors really realise the effect this can have on a comparatively small ballet organisation. Would it not be possible to do, as Sadler's Wells has done, and form a special group of student dancers to appear in the opera-ballets? This apart from the advantages it would offer to the students, would give the time and energy necessary to expand the repertory.

Finally the Swedish Ballet must acquire for itself a unique personality. Its performances need an individual signature, formed from its style of dancing and type of repertory. For this personality, which is, I think, slowly taking shape, one can only wait and hope.

LE SACRE DU PRINTEMPS

First given by the Royal Swedish Ballet on April 30, 1956. First performance during the Ballet Festival on June 4, 1956, at Det Kungliga Teatern.

Choreography, Leonide Massine. Music, Igor Stravinsky. Decor and Costumes, Nicholas Roerich.

CAST

The Chosen Virgin MARIANE ORLANDO

OF all the ballets I dreamed of in my youth it was perhaps of *Le Sacre du Printemps* that I dreamed most frequently. Still in my 'teens I played the gramophone records of the music continually, imagining Heaven knows what choreography, until its rhythms and harmonies were indelibly printed on my mind. Now seeing a version of the ballet for the first time, I have introduced this personal note at the outset because I am acutely aware that no ballet or

thing can survive the comparison with a visualised ideal. I was perhaps a little disappointed with Massine's ballet, but was surprised that I was not disappointed more.

The famous *Sacre*, that was greeted with hisses, boos and catcalls on May 29, 1913, was, of course, by Nijinsky. This work destined for legend was seen by very few as it only achieved a mere total of six performances, three in Paris and three in London. Stravinsky, himself, has bitterly criticised the production, but the ballet has never lacked for supporters (many of its champions never having seen it) and its place in ballet history is secure.

After the war, in 1920 to be precise, Diaghilev wished to revive the ballet, and the task of providing new choreography was entrusted to the young Massine. It was for this version that Lydia Sokolova created the Chosen Virgin, a role that ten years later was danced by Martha Graham at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, in Massine's only other prewar revival of the ballet. Since the war Massine has produced the ballet in Italy, and now in Sweden. Whether the present production is a revival of the Diaghilev ballet or a new version I cannot say, nor probably could anyone else other than Massine and a few of the dancers who took part in the 1920 version.

Stravinsky has said: "In composing *Sacre* I had imagined the spectacular part of the performance as a series of rhythmic mass movements of the greatest simplicity which would have an instantaneous effect on the audience, with no superfluous details or complications such as would suggest effort. The only solo was to be the sacrificial dance at the end of the piece. The music of that dance, clear and well-defined, demanded a corresponding choreography—simple and easy to understand."

In most ways Massine's version, which wrung from the composer his qualified approval, does comply with Stravinsky's requirements. Although the nature of the music imposes immense rhythmic complexity upon the choreography, the mass movements themselves are undeniably simple in outline, depending for their effectiveness on their cumulative repetition and the counter-pointed contrast between one group and another.

What Stravinsky meant by calling for choreography that was "simple and easy to understand" is difficult to see as, at one level at least, all choreography is easy to understand. However Massine's dances are certainly simple and even naïve, while the classroom has been so rigorously banished from the stage that the choreography could possibly be performed by a company of trained athletes providing they had the same response to music found in dancers.

Stravinsky has called his score an "objective construction" and said that Massine has grasped its character with "unparalleled subtlety." He continues, later: "There is no plot and no need to look for one. To sum up, *Le Sacre du Printemps* is a spectacle of pagan Russia, in two parts, that rules out a subject. The choreography is freely constructed on the music . . ." In considering this description of the ballet one must not only recognise Massine's success, but realise the nature of his achievement. What Massine has done in *Sacre* is to produce the first "symphonic" ballet. It was this that proved to be one of the most interesting aspects of the present revival; seeing at this distance of time the ballet that showed presumably the first move of Massine towards his "symphonic period" that was to have such a wide influence on the ballets of the following decade.

Nor is the ballet of only historical interest, for the work has immense power and force and is theatrically exciting in its visualisation of the music. The whole ballet is the abstracted essence of pagan society, and although the conception of the ballet, like the score itself, is now far from modern, the validity of the work is such that it is ready to take its place as a classic. The Roerich designs, which were originally produced for the Nijinsky version, have proved perhaps the least durable of the ballet's components, but they are well realised in the present revival. The second Roerich back-cloth (the one with a "frieze" of prehistoric monsters) is not used for this production, but I suspect that this may have been jettisoned in 1920.

Although the ballet is simple in its choreography, it is the kind of simplicity that is extremely difficult to dance. Some of the steps are athletically testing, and the music is throughout uncompromisingly hard. The company in general and Mariane Orlando in particular perform the ballet well, with a dedicated fervour. Orlando's controlled frenzy as the Chosen Virgin was noteworthy.

The orchestra, playing under Sweden's gifted young conductor Sixten Ehrling, gave a performance the like of which I have never heard accompanying the ballet at Covent Garden. Specially augmented for the occasion, the orchestra played the score better than my dizziest imaginings had made me think it possible.

THE THREE-CORNERED HAT

First given by the Royal Swedish Ballet on April 30, 1956. First performance during the Stockholm Festival on June 4, 1956, at Det Kungliga Teatern.

Choreography, Leonide Massine. Music, Manuel de Falla. Decor and Costumes, Pablo Picasso.

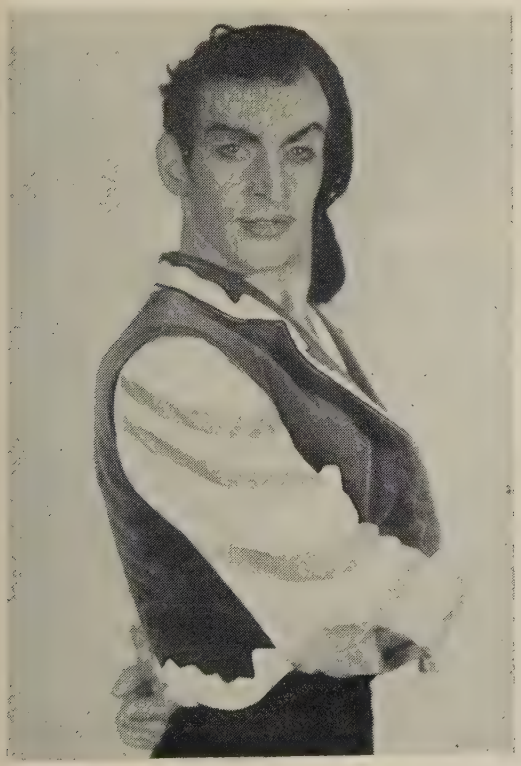
CAST

The Miller ..	WILLY SANDBERG
The Miller's Wife	YVONNE BROSSET
The Corregidor ..	TEDDY RHODIN
The Dandy ..	BENGT ANDERSSON

HERE we were on more familiar ground, and in honesty the company were not quite so successful. In part I think this was due to pagan Russia being nearer the Swedish temperament than catholic Spain, but a further contributory cause of the revival's lack of atmosphere is possibly the company's lack of experience in Spanish dancing, even in pseudo-Spanish dancing.

The revival follows closely that which Massine produced for Covent Garden in 1947. Indeed certain touches that Covent Garden has already lost (the Dandy's solo, the correct

AMOROUS MILLER: Willy Sandberg as the Miller in The Three-Cornered Hat.



PEASANT FIESTA: The company join in a Jota *to celebrate the fall of the Corregidor at the end of the ballet.* *Photos: Enar Merkel Rydberg*

timing of the Miller's spins on the bridge, and the Miller's kick aimed at a villager on the exit immediately before his *farrucca* among others) are here once more in place. Yet although certain details have been restored, Massine has not been so successful in conveying the exact nuance of the dances, and in one, and possibly two instances, the characterisation has been changed in a way not entirely accountable for on the grounds of individual interpretation.

The decor is well-produced, whiter than at Covent Garden, where the fellow back-cloth has an unfortunate Sahara air about it. The costumes were not so attractively realised, and in the case of the Jota dancers looked rather shoddy.

Willy Sandberg is a talented dancer, but at the present time the Miller seemed beyond his range, both as a dancer and an actor. There was remarkably little humour in his interpretation, which was apparently aimed at a grand Latin passion more appropriate to Lorca than the delicious Alarcon fable upon which the ballet's story is based. His dancing was not without its moments of excitement, as he has a strong if undisciplined technique, but the *farucca* was danced with only little regard to the score and differed somewhat from the version Massine taught Sadler's Wells and once danced himself.

As the Miller's Wife, Yvonne Brosset showed a clear understanding of the part, and danced with a flirtatious charm. She had a far better conception of the correct dance style than most of the rest of the company. Teddy Rhodin's well-acted Corregidor was made more an essay in mime than character dancing. Nor was he aristocratic enough in manner.

The dancing of the rest of the company had insufficient fire and feeling.

GAITE PARISIENNE

First given by the Royal Swedish Ballet on April 30, 1956, First performance at the Stockholm Festival on June 4, 1956, at Det Kungliga Teatern.

Choreography, Leonide Massine. Music, Jacques Offenbach arranged by Manuel Rosenthal. Decor and Costumes, Comte Etienne de Beaumont.

Cast

The Glove Seller ELSA MARIANNE VON ROSEN
The Flower Seller .. .. MONICA TROPP
La Lionne .. .. WIWEKA LJUNG
The Peruvian .. BJORN HOLMGREN
The Baron .. VERNER KLAVSEN
The Officer .. KENNETH PETERSEN
The Duke .. TEDDY RHODIN
Billiards Players JACQUES DELISLE, CAJ SELLING, GUNNAR RANDIN
Leader of Can-Can YVONNE BROSSET
Dancing Master MARIO MENGARELLI
Waiters ELIS GUSTAVSSON, BENGT ANDERSON, SVANTE LINDBERG, ECKI ERICSSON
Servants, Dandies, Soldiers and Cocodettes

IT might be a discreditable reflection upon present-day ballet companies, that while they can produce quite respectable versions of Massine's lesser ballets, the full quality of the masterpieces the choreographer produced for the Diaghilev Ballet apparently eludes them. Of course it may be that our modern dancers are neither better nor worse than their Diaghilev predecessors but merely different, yet whatever the reason it is undeniable that Sadler's Wells made a better thing our of *Mam'zelle Angot* than *La Boutique Fantasque*, and that the De Cuevas company were happier in *Le Beau Danube* than *The Good-Humoured Ladies*. These precedents are repeated in Sweden where the revival of *Gaité Parisienne* (not one of the choreographer's happiest inspirations) is more successful than the same company's *Three-Cornered Hat*.

Although the ballet is formless and pointless, with its infectiously cheerful Offenbach score and invigorating, if not particularly inventive, choreography, it can be a good closing ballet exhilarating to dancers and audience alike.

The decor and costumes by Comte Etienne de Beaumont are entirely suitable for the ballet and not unamusing in their mixture of the Second Empire and a Lyons' Corner House. The programme note that describes these designs as being "after Winterhalter" is, as was pointed out on the occasion of the ballet's revival by International Ballet, hopelessly inappropriate.

The Swedish Ballet fill all the ballet's principal roles most effectively. Björn Holmgren in Massine's own part of the Peruvian Traveller had the grotesque drollery of Massine himself, but did not attempt a carbon copy and wisely substituted an original air of fussiness for the inane bumptiousness of the choreographer.

Although the Peruvian is, one supposes, nominally the ballet's leading role, Massine has reserved the most rewarding part for the Glove-Seller. This, which was created by Nina Tarakanova, has for long been one of Danilova's most celebrated portrayals. Elsa Marianne von Rosen proved a natural for the part, and her vivacious dancing and sparkling personality added lustre to the whole performance. Verner Klavsen, an elegant dancer, partnered her well as the Baron.

The rest of the cast was not uniformly so good. Wiweka Ljung's La Lionne (called in this production the Lady in Red) had distinction and the trio of billiards players (Jacques DeLisle, Caj Selling and Gunnar Randin) danced with virility. Some of the dancers need to unbend a little, however, and the Can-Can, with the exception of Yvonne Brosset, would not have turned the Moulin Rouge green with envy. Yet Massine's character style is so alien to the rest of the repertory that their generally assured and enjoyable performance is a considerable achievement and shows the progress made by the company in recent years.

After exciting performances of the Stravinsky and Falla scores, Sixten Ehrling led the orchestra into the Offenbach with the gusto of a headmaster awarding a half-holiday.

PARISIAN GALLANTRY: Elsa Marianne von Rosen, as the Glove-seller, with Verner Klavsen, as the Baron, in the pas de deux.

PERUVIAN INTRUSION: Elsa Marianne von Rosen with Bjorn Holmgren as the Peruvian who visits Paris for the first time.

Photos: Enar Merkel Rydberg

Somnambulism

First performed publicly by the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet at Sadler's Wells Theatre on May 29, 1956. Choreography, Kenneth Macmillan; Music, Stan Kenton, arranged by John Lanchbery.

The Sleep

First Dream *Anxiety* .. .. MARGARET HILL
Second Dream *Monotony* .. .. DONALD BRITTON
Third Dream *Premonition*.. .. .. ANNE HEATON

The Awakening

with ELAINE THOMAS, JOAN BLAKENEY, VALERIE REECE, DAVID HARDING, ALEXANDER BENNETT, ROY CARLTON

ANXIETY (*above*): *Margaret Hill* (*centre*) *as the first dreamer whose main preoccupation in a dream state is anxiety.*

PREMONITION (*below*): *The silhouettes of Bryan Lawrence, David Shields, Edward Miller and Anne Heaton in the third of the dream episodes. Heaton believes she has been responsible for the death of a man and here she sees his body carried across the stage in a funeral procession. Photos: Denis de Marney*

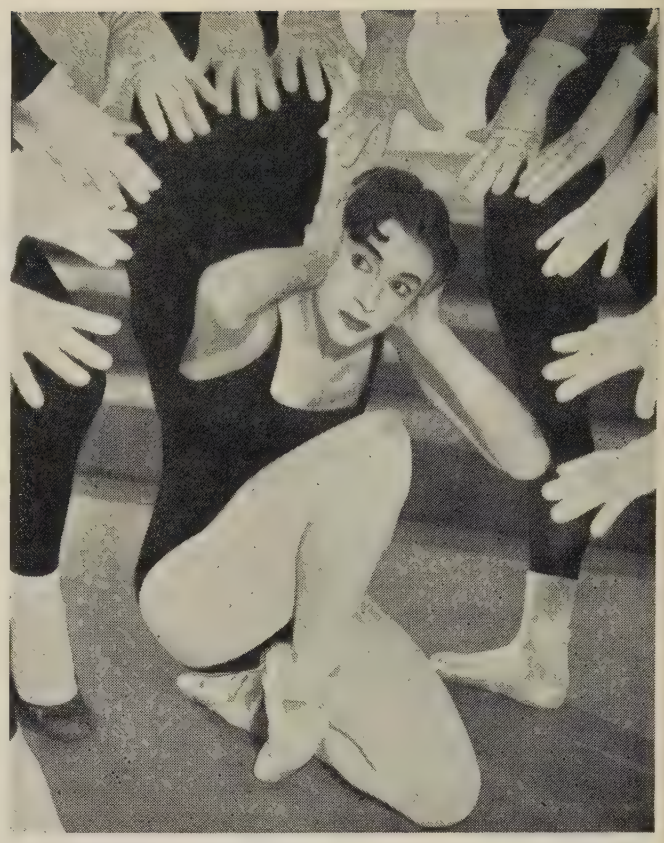
CHOREOGRAPHY

NO one fortunate enough to have been present at that first private performance of the Sadler's Wells Choreographic Group on February 1, 1953, is likely to forget the initial impact of *Somnambulism*. Coming at the conclusion of an evening of experimental try-out ballets by inexperienced choreographers that had been more interesting than startling, *Somnambulism*, Mcmillan's very first ballet, was obviously the work of a new choreographer potentially of the front rank.

Soon after *Somnambulism's* creation it was hoped to include the ballet, for such was its immediate success, in the regular repertory of the Theatre Ballet. This, however, was made impossible by difficulties over the score, but the ballet, under the sobriquet of *The Dreamers*, had a performance on Television. Now three and a half years later *Somnambulism* has been given its first public showing.

During the years between Macmillan has been far from idle: so far, in fact, that he has established a reputation for himself, as yet only in England, as a major choreographer. Consequently this apprentice effort on its revival must willy-nilly stand up to comparison with the choreographer's more mature achievements.

Although *Somnambulism* is as remarkable a first ballet as any created since Robbins took New York by storm with *Fancy Free*, I cannot feel that Macmillan has quite repeated



Robbins' feat of producing a valid repertory piece at his first attempt.

By a coincidence, in some ways *Somnambulism* appears to owe quite a lot to Robbins, though I hasten to add the Robbins of a later period than that which gave birth to *Fancy Free*. The form of the ballet is not entirely dissimilar from *Age of Anxiety*, even though it is in every way a simpler conception.

Three people are seen in restless sleep. After this brief Prologue the tortured dream of each sleeper is shown to the audience. In an Epilogue the dreamers awake, only too aware that they have not been getting the right kind of sleep. The three dreams are sub-titled *Anxiety*, *Monotony* and *Premonition*.

In this ballet Macmillan has come precious close to that impossibility the abstract ballet. He has nearly refined away the human element, and left abstracted fears and anxieties. Some idea of the ballet's lack of human characterisation may perhaps be deduced from the fact that the role created by the choreographer himself is now danced by a woman, with virtually the same effect, although in fairness I cannot say after this lapse of time how much the choreography has been modified.

The ballet is incredibly polished for a young man just 23 years old. Its unrelentless neurotic pulse and its nightmare screaming perhaps betray its choreographer's youth and "undergraduate status," just as the lack of clear differentiation in mood between the three movement studies (their names could be changed around with no great loss) indicates his inexperience. There are also one or two ugly moments, those so sudden deaths in *Premonition*, for instance, when the ballet teeters, admittedly without over-toppling, on the edge of unconscious humour. Yet already Macmillan possessed a style that makes the choreography as unmistakably his as that for *Noctambules* or *Solitaire*.

One's final opinion of this work must be admiration for its brilliance and promise, an admiration enhanced by the remembrance that unlike many other "infant prodigies" of choreography, such as Massine, Balanchine and Petit, Macmillan had no one to guide his first steps into the unknown territory of creation.

THREE SLEEPY PEOPLE (top left): Anne Heaton, Donald Britton and Margaret Hill as the three people whose nightmares form the theme of Macmillan's Somnambulism.

ENCIRCLING HANDS (top right): Margaret Hill in the Anxiety *dream imagines that she is trapped by hands. Gloved hands play an important part in the whole of the ballet.*

DREAM CORPSE (left): Anne Heaton, in the third dream, with David Shields for whose death she imagines herself responsible. Photos: Denis de Marney

DANCING

POSSIBLY no emotion is easier to realise on the stage than fear, and when the fear is unbridled and phrenetic its dramatic presentation becomes a push-over. Macmillan's three refugees from the psychiatrist's couch are not hard to present emotionally. However, the choreography is strange and difficult, ordinary steps are given a haggard nuance and demand considerable interpretative skill.

The original admirable cast of Macmillan, Poole and Lane was entirely successful in capturing the ballet's schizophrenic classicism.

In the first dream, Margaret Hill, if you will forgive the jargon, was neurotic rather than the zombie-like psychotic portrayed by the choreographer himself, but no less effective for that. Anne Heaton's Premonition was impressive in its controlled power.

At the only performance I could see the second dream was danced not by Britton, but by Leslie White. In him Sadler's Wells have the makings of a fine character dancer, and he danced in this ballet with strength and conviction.

Clive Barnes

MUSIC

THE music-lover exclusively interested in serious music tends to forget or chooses to ignore the fact that a valid claim can be made out for jazz as the most vital and direct musical expression of the life and spirit of our hectic times. Kenneth Macmillan, in attempting to show the nightmare visions that disturb the sleep of three presumably neurotic citizens of this Age of Anxiety, has logically set his ballet to the sophisticated tunes and primitive rhythms of contemporary "symphonic" jazz.

The Stan Kenton music he has chosen powerfully evokes the right moods; and if any of the three other pieces might have served equally well to express *Monotony* as the one that accompanies that particular movement, and if there also seems to be greater inventiveness in the choreography than in the music, the fault is not entirely the composer's.

To say that the Theatre Ballet Orchestra has not mastered the style of the music would be an understatement; but then it would be as unfair to blame the players for this as to expect one of Kenton's bands to give an acceptable performance of *Coppelia*.

The percussion department coped adequately enough with Kenton's subtly insistent rhythmic patterns, but the playing in general made me wish that the ballet had been danced to gramophone records, as I believe was actually the case when it was originally given by the Sadler's Wells Choreographic Group.

David Hunt

DECOR

THERE are a few ballets for which the best possible decor is no decor at all. Almost every company can afford to have at least one ballet in their repertoire designed—or not designed—in this way. The important thing is that a lighting expert must replace the painter.

New York City Ballet have many—too many—ballets with no settings other than a cyclorama or black tabs. But then that company has the tremendous asset of a great master of light in Jean Rosenthal. So brilliant is she that she often makes us forget that we have seen possibly three ballets in an evening which used no painted decor at all. Festival Ballet, also with the aid of good lighting made Lander's *Etudes* appear to be one of their most suitably designed works for the unhelpful stage of the Festival Hall.

Somnambulism is, as far as I can remember, the first work in the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet's repertoire that has virtually no decor. All the dancers, with the exception of the principal male dancer in red, are dressed in all-over black tights. The *corps de ballet* wear black masks and effective play is made of their white-gloved hands. The setting consists of a sky-cloth in front of which is a rostrum; the wings consist of black velvets. The lighting is mainly good, though not perhaps as effective as it was when the work was first given by the Wells Choreographic Group.

This kind of thing is perfectly all right if the ballet is given in a programme that contains other colourful works such as those designed by Nicholas Georgiadis. The complete lack of colour rests the eye. The danger is that if given in a colourless programme, *Somnambulism* as it stands will then merely look economical and drab. Success will depend entirely on its juxtaposition to other ballets in any one programme.

I therefore feel that *Somnambulism* should have had some kind of decor, even if only in the use of more colour in the costumes. If it was a question of economy, it must be pointed out that to dye white tights costs little more than to buy black ones. The late and ever-lamented Christian Bérard could make this apparent lack of designing seem more wonderful than a host of painted settings and elaborate costumes. It is perhaps too much to hope that anybody else is going to be able to work such wonders—but it would do them no harm to have a shot at it.

Peter Williams

MONOTONY: *Donald Britton in his acrobatic variation from the second of the dream scenes. The role was also later danced with success by Leslie White.* *Photo: Denis de Marney*

SOLITAIRE

First given by the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet at Sadler's Wells Theatre on June 7, 1956. Choreography, Kenneth Macmillan; Music, Malcolm Arnold; Decor and Costumes, Desmond Heeley.
"A kind of game for one . . ."

CAST

The Girl MARGARET HILL

with

DONALD BRITTON, SARA NEIL
MICHAEL BOULTON
DONALD MACLEARY

and

SHIRLEY BISHOP, PAULINE BARNES, JOAN BLAKENEY, YVONNE ENGLISH, YVONNE LAKIER, ELAINE THOMAS, DAVID SHIELDS, BRYAN LAWRENCE, EDWARD MILLER, LESLIE WHITE, ALEXANDER BENNETT, DAVID HARDING

CHOREOGRAPHY

MACMILLAN is a modern choreographer, so much the child of his time that I suspect it to be difficult for those who are not his contemporaries to appreciate fully his genius. Genius, a word I would personally apply to not more than four or five present-day choreographers, is, I think, not too vast a term to describe Macmillan. There comes a time when any critic tires of ifs, buts and maybes, and wants to climb out on the bough of an assertion. For this critic that time has come with *Solitaire*. Kenneth Macmillan is a choreographic genius capable of transforming the ballet of our day.

Solitaire, like Ashton's *Les Rendezvous* is a Song of Innocence. Mr. Macmillan wears his innocence with a difference, and behind the unaffected charm and gaiety is a note of near-sadness, because Macmillan inevitably produces ballets for a generation born on the wrong side of the window-pane against which we press our noses. We shall never know whether the lonely child, whose game *Solitaire* is, is playing with her thoughts or looking back at childhood with the eyes of experience, like that sophisticated young New Yorker in the *Candy for a Penny* number from the film *New Faces*. The important thing is that she is quite happy in her isolation; the thoughts fade, the people disappear, but she remains herself. To Mr. Thurber's prophetic statement "we are all disenchanted" *Solitaire* adds the footnote "and rather like it."

Macmillan has good ideas for ballets, but so do people who are not choreographers. Macmillan's mastery is primarily one of

SUSPENDED RELAXATION: Donald Britton's exit after his variation, carried by Leslie White, Alexander Bennett, David Shields, Edward Miller, David Harding and Bryan Lawrence.

choreographic inventiveness. He is the least literary of choreographers in the sense that his ballets could never be transposed into a literary dramatic medium.

Inventive as he is, he never wastes movement. There is nothing in his choreography that is pointlessly clever, everything is dictated by music and mood. In *Solitaire* his touch is light, playful and childlike. The ballet is a collection of dance fragments, some inspired by children's games, remembered one presumes from some school playground of the choreographer's childhood.

What has always been impressive in Macmillan's work, and never more so than in his latest ballet, is his understanding of choreographic pace. His slow choreography, for example the leisurely hand-on-head follow your leader at the end of the ballet, has the same effortless flow as his *allegro* passages. The variations in pace are made with great subtlety, and types of movement are carefully arranged for their visual effect.

Not that there is anything particularly "pictorial" about *Solitaire*. Macmillan's preoccupation with the visual never leads him to compose arty groups, or beautifully balanced poses. His qualities are dynamic rather than static, which is why photographs give little idea of his work.

Whereas the average run of choreographers take a theme and express it in movement, Macmillan appears to approach movement as a composer approaches sound.

It is fortunate for him that he is a classical dancer. Without the background of this school and without the basic vocabulary the school has given him, his choreography could have become a dust-bin of odd movement, a personal gibberish out of which he could never have constructed a style. Already he is using classical dances with more assurance. His point-work in *Solitaire* is less self-conscious than before, and for the first time in his ballets, this is just an example, he gives a male dancer a *double tour en l'air*. (What next! *Fouettés?*) Yet in this completer acceptance of the conventional, Macmillan has not become commonplace. It is a sign of his increasing maturity and strength.

It is noticeable also that in acquiring a style he has picked up trade-marks. The tossing-up of Hill by the boys is taken from *Noctambules*, some little stamping steps of joy by Hill and MacLeary recall the lovers in *House of Birds*, while Neil's disapproving pecking gestures when her solo is copied by Hill evokes the same ballet, and the comic *grand adagio* is related to the serious elaborations of *Noctambules* and *Danses Concertantes*. In time he will be accused of "repeating himself" (as are Ashton and Balanchine) and he will have to resist the temptation to suppress his personal signature.

Macmillan has from the first been an admirably expressive choreographer, and in *Solitaire* he contrives to suggest the whole atmosphere of childhood. The ballet also opens new possibilities for his future in the sense of humour it shows the choreographer to possess. In *Danses Concertantes* there is much wit but none of the fun Macmillan has unexpectedly produced in this latest ballet. Sara Neil's Charleston and an absurd *pas de quatre* with some kind of magic flute are examples of choreographic humour at its purest and most uninhibited.

Macmillan still has something to learn about a ballet's structure. He is far too content to fall back on *divertissement* form for his works and to choose his score accordingly. The time has come when he might try his hand with the grander, though not necessarily finer, design made possible by a continuous score.

Nor is the young choreographer's selection always unerring. Thus in the same ballet we find brilliant moments, like Britton's dive into the arms of the *corps de ballet*, side by side with the dull would-be nostalgic dance for Hill, six girls, and yards of purple tulle.

However, *Solitaire* remains a wonderful ballet, and will remain so for many years, I imagine. And it was so nice to see that Macmillan could produce a ballet that contained not the slightest implication of a macabre imagination. Versatility, more important to a choreographer than to any other artist, has apparently been added to Macmillan's other gifts.

DANCING

THE main burden of the ballet falls upon Margaret Hill. As the solitary girl, alone in the bustle of children's play, the warmth and tenderness of her personality hold the whole ballet together. Hers was a remarkable performance, piquant, appealing and beautifully danced. A slight misjudgment in this characterisation and the ballet might have seemed a little coy or sentimental, but Hill fell into none of the traps the theme presented.

Hill has improved technically since her last appearances in London as has Sara Neil. Indeed the present Neil is almost unrecognisable from the coltish, almost awkward, dancer she once was. Her comedy role in *Solitaire* was

(*continued on page 24*)

LAMENT: Margaret Hill supported by the corps de ballet *in one of the dances from* Solitaire.
Photos: Denis de Marney

DROP CURTAIN: Desmond Heeley's design for the orange gauze drop which opens the ballet.

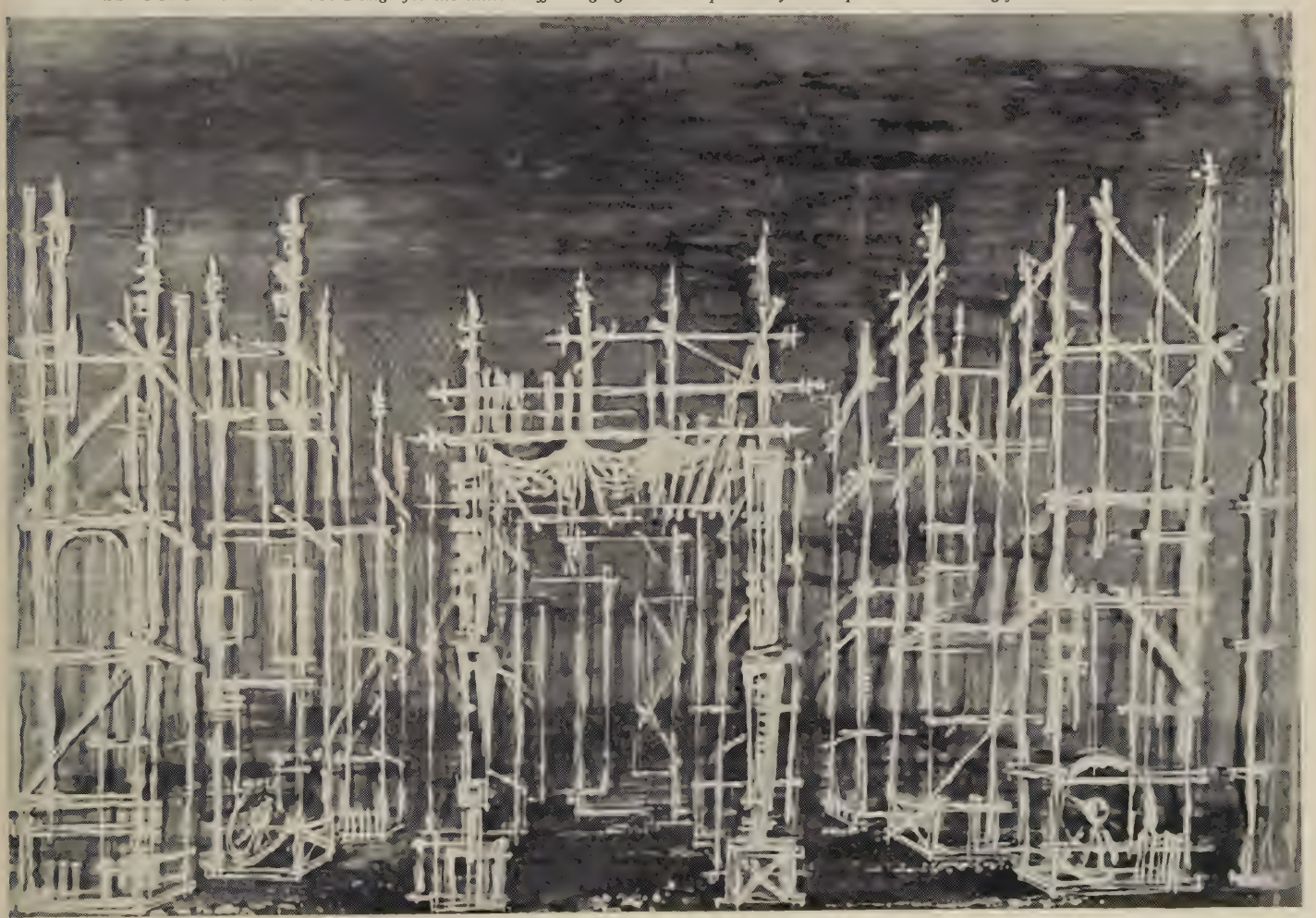
PRINCIPAL DANCER: Design for Margaret Hill's orange and pink costume.

DESIGNS FOR *SOLITAIRE*

Photographed by Denis de Marney

Three designs by Desmond Heeley, an artist new to the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet, for Kenneth Macmillan's most recent ballet — *Solitaire*.

STRUCTURAL SETTING: Design for the white scaffolding against a turquoise sky which provides the setting for Macmillan's Solitaire.



PAS DE DEUX: Margaret Hill and Donald MacLeary in the beautiful and evocative dance which is one of the peak moments of the ballet.

CARTWHEEL: Michael Boulton was given many opportunities to show that he can dance a difficult role with ease and brilliance.
Photos: Denis de Marney

exceptionally well done. Tanaquil LeClercq, whom she momentarily recalled, could not have danced the zany choreography with more punch and point.

In the past Macmillan has given Donald Britton two or three memorable parts, but the urchin bravura of his long solo in *Solitaire* is probably the best. Britton negotiated its acrobatic intricacies with irresistible bounce.

The two other leading male dancers, Michael Boulton and Donald MacLeary, are rather less sensationally presented than Britton. Boulton's role, however, also bristled with difficulties and was equally brilliantly danced. In Britton's absence Boulton also gave a commendable performance of Britton's solo.

FOUR ON A FLUTE: Britton, Neil, Boulton and Hill in the witty pas de quatre.
Photo: Denis de Marney

To MacLeary the choreographer has entrusted the beautiful and evocative *pas de deux*, and the young dancer's elegance and sure partnering fully justified the choice.

The entire company danced the ballet with apparent enjoyment and evident understanding.

Clive Barnes

MUSIC

KENNETH MACMILLAN has set his new masterpiece of a ballet—and a masterpiece it certainly is—to Malcolm Arnold's English Dances. These delightful pieces, optimistic in mood and free from any trace of pretentiousness and bombast, show Arnold in his most captivating and inventive vein. Although they seem to be based on folk themes, all the tunes are entirely original, their folk character deriving from the modal scales Arnold has used.

The writing, particularly for woodwind and brass, is masterly, the texture wondrously pellucid and transparent. Though light, the music is by no means trivial and must be as much a joy to play as it obviously is to dance to.

Arnold composed the Dances in two sets, the first four being finished in December, 1950, the second in June, 1951. Macmillan has used the third *Grazioso* dance from the second set, with its chiming bells accompaniment, as the introduction for his ballet, repeating it at the end. Arnold has also obligingly written two additional dances for Macmillan: the jazzy Polka danced by Sara Neil, which made me hope that one day Macmillan and Arnold will present us with a contemporary *Façade*, and the evocative Sarabande for the *pas de deux* of Margaret Hill and Donald MacLeary. Both are fully worthy to be included in future concert-hall performances of the Dances.

An excellent recording on Decca LW5166 makes an ideal souvenir of the ballet, though it naturally does not include the two newly composed pieces.

David Hunt

DECOR

IN spite of its surface divertissement structure, Macmillan's *Solitaire* is a cry from the heart of today. So much of the world's troubles

stem from loneliness and uncertainty. Yet this is only the very fine silken strand which binds the various dances together, a strand which has apparently been almost invisible to many who have so far written about the ballet.

It was extremely apt, therefore, that the ballet should have been played out against a forest of sketchy white scaffolding regimented against a turquoise sky. It seemed somehow to represent the grandiose plans and unfulfilled dreams that have been symbolic of the post-war years. What the ragged orange drop-curtain, decorated with a sun-burst, was supposed to represent I would not know—but it was very pretty.

Had I not known that the setting was designed by a young British designer, Desmond Heeley, my immediate impression would have been that it had been painted by one of two designers who have worked for Roland Petit—Stanislas Lépri or Carzou. It had the chalkiness of the former and the vertical lines of the latter. Possibly Heeley has never seen the work of either of these two designers, but it is extraordinary, as I pointed out in an article last month, how the influence of Petit and his collaborators seeps in everywhere in our theatres.

Against this setting, Margaret Hill in an orange and pink tutu looked fine. On her head she wore a dotty turban of many coloured roses which provided the one real piece of witty designing in the whole ballet. The remainder of the costumes were heavy-handed; their colour was inoffensive, but their shape was unflattering. Few male dancers look good in a kind of stiffened chest-plate in dark petrol green shaded velvet, specially when it finishes in a straight line just above the breast; the remainder of the costume was chalk white. Such a complete contrast of colour and texture, while possibly looking charming in the design, was hard and unyielding in execution and made the dancers look stocky in movement.

The girls wore something rather similar—bodices in shaded plum with short white skirts. The velvet did not look so hard on them because their skin right against the top of the bodice softened the contrast. These two sets of costumes were of the type that I always mentally label—"Very British 1930."

FOLLOW ME LEADER: Margaret Hill leads the company in a round; a moment from one of the group dances of Solitaire. *Photo: Denis de Marney*

Real wit in costume design comes not easily to British designers. Osbert Lancaster is successful because he is essentially a *pasticheur*; Kenneth Rowell has brought it off in one or two works; Lord Berners and John Armstrong brought an eclectic wit to some pre-war Ashton ballets, nor was it unknown in early works by Cecil Beaton before he resorted to elaborate prettiness in all his stage designing. I could not help thinking all through *Solitaire* what a masterpiece it would have been if only the Wells could have used an artist like Joan Miro. Something of the quality which he achieved in Massine's *Jeux d'Enfants* would make such a perfect parallel to Macmillan's choreography.

Peter Williams

ALL FROM ABROAD

LATIN-AMERICAN BALLET

Given on BBC Television on May 20. Pianists, Braulio Martins de Souza and Roberto Lurie. Designer, George Djurkovic. Narrator, Harold Kasket. Produced by Margaret Dale.

IF it is at all possible to judge from such a programme as this, the Spanish dance heritage in Latin-America seems to be giving way to forms more native to that continent. Although some of the dances obviously spring from Spain, others owe their inspiration to folk-dance sources. Only four dances were given: two from the Argentine and one each from Panama and a Mexican fishing village. Peru, Ecuador, Uruguay and Guatemala made no contribution to the dances, but some of their traditional costumes were displayed.

This programme was remarkable as an example of different factors blending together into an artistic whole. In this case the treatment revealed that Margaret Dale has no lack of ideas. Both the lighting and camera work were nicely varied and could hardly have been improved, while the sets provided a suitably arid background, drowsy with heat. And, so unusual for television, the dancers had a most generous amount of studio space for movement.

The company itself works as a team and it is well produced and disciplined. While the girls are inclined to move with an indolent grace, the complicated footwork of the men in the folk-dances of Argentina made one feel that they must have been drilled like soldiers. And at times one is even reminded of the Moiseyev troupe as horizontal lines of dancers file past the cameras to a stimulating rhythm of guitars. Husky voiced folk-singers in the background helped the dancers create an atmosphere immediately.

TELEVISION
Reviewed by E. C. MASON

Even steps borrowed from classical ballet, *double tours* and supported *arabesques* in *Panama* got by because they were sparingly used. The narration given by Harold Kasket, as a perspiring guide with a clumsy Spanish accent from Messrs. Thomas Cook, did not. Luckily there was not enough of Pepe or Pedro's commentary to spoil the programme.

L'OEUF A LA COQUE

Given on Independent Television on May 27. Choreography by Roland Petit. Music by Maurice Thiriet. Produced by Val Parnell.

Dancers:
COLETTE MARCHAND
SERGE PERRAULT

BOTH Simenon and Anouilh have prepared ballet scenarios very similar in mood to their literary works, and I imagine that if ever Ben Travers had been invited to do the same it would have turned out rather like *L'Oeuf à la Coque*.

Perhaps, indeed, the greatest merit of televised ballet is that it gives us opportunities to see dancers whom we have not seen for some time and are not likely to see in visiting companies. Although only an excerpt was given, we were grateful to see Colette Marchand again and, taking it into account that she is no longer dancing regularly, not a little surprised that she was in such good form.

Serge Perrault partnered her well with a nice touch of French farce in this ridiculous piece of choreography. One would prefer the compère not to ridicule ballet by pretending that he cannot pronounce "choreography." However, Tommy Trinder is a monosyllabic comedian, so nobody would be astonished if it were really just another case of illiteracy.

RONDO CAPRICCIOSO

Given on Independent Television on June 10. Music: Saint-Saëns. Choreography by Serge Lifar.

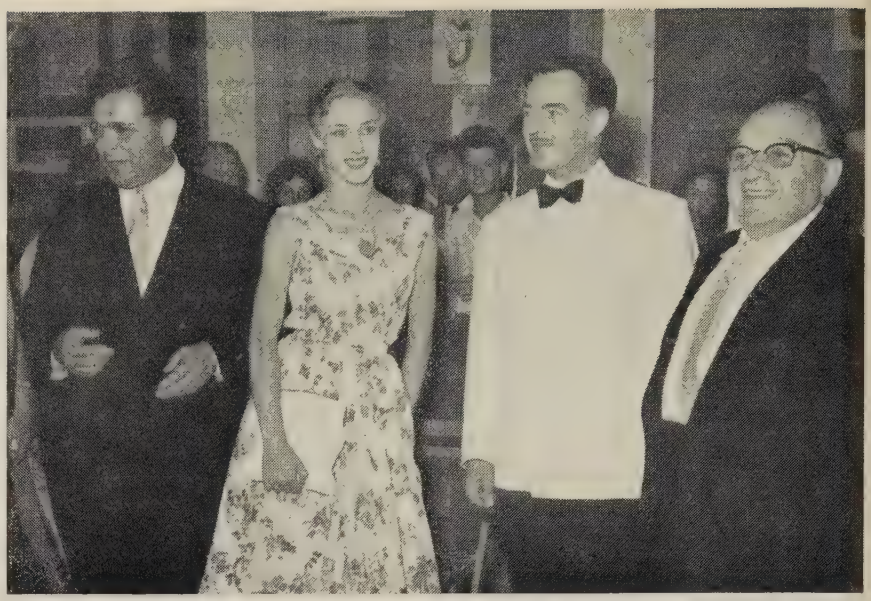
Dancers
YVETTE CHAUVIRE PETER VAN DIJK

IN this exhibition piece Lifar has given both dancers so many *pirouettes* and so many intricate and spectacular steps to execute simultaneously that, for most of the time, the eye could not make up its mind which dancer to follow. The cameras rather tended to simplify the problem by taking the easy way out and treating the *pas de deux* as two solos whenever possible.

Nevertheless, the majority of steps used suited the dancers remarkably well and apart from supported *pirouettes*, which were slurred over prudently, the dancing was of a very high standard. Chauviré's movements were distinguished by softness and control, while Van Dijk's turns, accomplished with extraordinary ease, were a pleasure to watch.

It is well known that good turns do not necessarily make a dancer. Neither do countless *pirouettes* and a vague Spanish style disguise the lack of inventiveness of a choreographer.

RUSSIANS ARRIVE: Vladimir Bourmeister, Ballet Master of the Stanislavsky and Nemirovitch-Dantchenko Ballet from Moscow, with one of his ballerinas, Sophie Vinogradova, on their arrival at Orly airport for their season in Paris. Photos: Lido



RECEPTION IN TEL AVIV: At a party after Festival Ballet's première at Habimah Theatre. ((L. to r.) Alexander Abramov (Soviet Ambassador), Toni Lander, Sir John Nicholls (British Ambassador) and the company's director, Julian Braunsweg. Festival Ballet had a triumphant season in Israel where they played for three weeks. Photo: Attar

curtain up!

Ballet honoured indirectly

BALLET was represented in this year's Birthday Honours only indirectly, by the conferring of a knighthood on Professor William Coldstream of the Slade School of Art.

Sir William is a member of the Ballet Advisory Committee of the Sadler's Wells Companies, and it is no coincidence that the Slade School is now producing some talented young artists with a real bent for theatrical design. This is of course nothing particularly new as the Slade has already been mainly responsible for Rex Whistler, Oliver Messel and James Bailey among other notable British designers.

The powers and responsibilities of the Ballet Advisory Committee have never been publicly defined and it would be interesting to know what part it plays in shaping the policy of the companies. It would perhaps be even more interesting to know the views of the artists on the panel about the decors of certain recent productions.

Covent Garden besieged

WE hear some fantastic tales about the lengths to which some people contemplate going in order to obtain tickets for the Bolshoi Ballet from Moscow when it comes to give its three-week season in October at Covent Garden. All these tactics will probably prove to be quite unnecessary as the Royal Opera House has a large seating capacity and the Russians are to give a fair number of performances of each of the four ballets. These facts, together with the limitations rightly imposed on the number of tickets sold to any person in the queue, should discourage excessively long queuing. No doubt a handful of fanatics will try to demonstrate their enthusiasm by queuing for longer than they need. They are welcome to the discomfort.

In spite of the enormous number of letters already received at the box office requesting seats, it seems that Covent Garden has the matter well in hand and the distribution will be as fair as possible.

When the Stanislavsky Ballet from Moscow recently played at the Châtelet Theatre in Paris, the price of the stalls was as high as £3. At the time of writing the price of seats at Covent Garden for the Bolshoi Ballet has not been announced; but it should be remembered that the company is twice as big as the company playing in Paris. Possibly the prices will be twice as high!

Important question dodged

THE figures recently announced by the Royal Opera House concerning their finances were revealing in many ways, but an important question was still dodged—how much of this subsidy goes to opera and how much to ballet?

All attempts at trying to get these figures revealed have been met with the reply that it is impossible to separate the two. The indication is, however, that ballet receives comparatively little State support. If this is so, why not say so? It might well prove, if properly presented, a potent argument for a larger subsidy.

A Pavlova exhibition

SINCE the now famous midnight gala on the night of January 23, twenty-five years after the death of Anna Pavlova, not much has been heard publicly of the Pavlova Commemoration Committee. However, they have not been idle. Their next venture is to collaborate with the London Museum on the Anna Pavlova Commemorative Exhibition to be held there in the autumn. Opening on September 4, it will remain open until December 31.

The exhibition will occupy five rooms in the Museum, and will draw on material from collections in France, Holland, the United States, and possibly Russia, as well as the British Isles.

The many portraits, sketches, costumes, photographs and designs, a great number of which have never been previously exhibited, will record Pavlova's career from her earliest days at the Maryinsky Theatre to her world tours of the 'twenties. At the same time there will be an attempt to assess her place in the development of modern ballet and, in particular, her contribution to the evolution of classical dancing.

Cranko's three-acter

JOHN CRANKO, who writes all his own scenarios, has a habit of changing titles. His proposed new three-act work for the Sadler's Wells Ballet has been known tentatively as *The Green Serpent* for quite a long while; now the title has been changed to the *Prince of the Pagodas*. If past experience is any guide, it might well be changed before it has its London première in September.

Rehearsals are well ahead and because of this, Cranko's ballet to John Addison music, originally projected for the Theatre Ballet this summer, had to be postponed.

Great hopes are held for the new long work, especially as its score is the first written for ballet by Benjamin Britten. Britten, when a very young man, was keen to write a ballet for the Camargo Society but the proposal fell through. Since then some of his orchestral works, particularly the sets of variations on themes by Frank Bridge and by Purcell, have been used over and over again for ballets. The new work is said to be essentially modern in approach but based structurally on the Tchaikovsky-Petipa classics.

Three for one part

HOW indispensable can a dancer be? When Donald Britton was recently prevented by an injured knee from dancing in some performances of Macmillan's *Solitaire* during the Theatre Ballet's season at Sadler's Wells, his role had to be shared among no less than three dancers. This probably constitutes some kind of a record.

Now that the Theatre Ballet appear so seldom in London, it must be all the more

infuriating to a dancer to be prevented from appearing. We felt particularly sorry this year for Brenda Bolton who has taken over a number of leading roles since the company was last seen in its home theatre. She was unable to dance then before the London audience because of an indisposition which kept her off stage for all but the last few days of the season.

Next year, we hear, the company is likely to have two short seasons in London—in the spring and autumn. We hope that it can be arranged that they do not clash with the ballet season at Covent Garden. The Theatre Ballet is also likely to undertake another American tour in the near future.

Sailors are different

AT the risk of being accused of carping, may I breathe a word in the ears of some of the current casts of sailors in *Pineapple Poll*. They do not seem to be aware that a naval salute is very different from a military one. The sight of half these "sailors" saluting like soldiers is scarcely less disconcerting than Poll's own left-handed attempt.

A birthday record

A CHANCE remark dropped by Dame Ninette de Valois led to her being given an unusual present. She happened to say one day that she never saw all the press cuttings of the ballets given by Sadler's Wells; the remark was overheard by Bill Beresford of the Press Office at Covent Garden. He then collected all the photographs and press cuttings for Ashton's recent *Birthday Offering* and had them mounted in a large scrapbook, which was then bound in red.

A HUG FROM DANNY: When Janine Charrat was recently rehearsing her ballet Seven Sins at *La Scale, Milan, she was visited by film star Danny Kaye. He took a look at Charrat and then at the size of La Scala and remarked, What, so small in something so large!" So overwhelmed was he by the incongruity that he gave Charrat a big hug.*

Charrat has now left to mount ballets in South America, Kaye is touring the world for the United Nations Relief Fund.

Photos: Lido

Each of the ballerinas signed their pictures and Frederick Ashton wrote a short tribute. The telegrams which Dame Ninette received, congratulating her on the 25 years of Sadler's Wells Ballet, were also included. Beresford's gift to Dame Ninette will thus provide her with a record of one of the happiest occasions in the company's quarter-century.

The Sleeping Beanstalk

TO people who know ballet well, the stories of most of them are usually pretty clear—specially after they have been seen more than once. However, to those who see a ballet for the first time it often means little or nothing. We always thought that the Sadler's Wells version of *The Sleeping Beauty* was foolproof as a story, but now it appears it is not.

Recently we heard an elderly lady being questioned about her first visit to the ballet a few days previously. When asked what she had seen, she gave the matter some thought and then replied, "*Jack and the Beanstalk*, I believe." As far as we can see, growing shrubbery is all that these two tales have in common; but then the poor lady might easily have mistaken one of the Wells dancers for the giant.

Humble beginnings in Russia

WHEN we talk about the humble beginnings of British ballet we are apt to forget that Russian ballet started in a far humbler way. Presiding over the Sixth Annual Congress of the Federation of Russian Classical Ballet on June 3, Tamara Karsavina said of Russian ballet, "It began with 12 little girls; you have much more than that."

She went on to say that an expedient was found in St. Petersburg by enrolling the Naval cadets for compulsory classes and in this way the male element in Russian ballet prospered and promotion in the navy depended as much on dancing prowess as anything.

Talking about the early training of dancers in her day, Karsavina said, "We lived, worked, and submitted to severe discipline . . . we grumbled a great deal; but how well off we were. We became dedicated to dancing . . . and from early years we belonged to the theatre."

The Federation of Russian Classical Ballet is flourishing because this year there were 107 candidates for examination, a considerable increase on previous years.

The Congress, which lasted for a week, concluded with a performance at the French Institute given in Madame Karsavina's honour. Ten schools presented over 100 pupils in 16 items.

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happy birthday to...

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Alfred Rodrigues	Choreographer	18
Christine Mayer	Ballet Theatre	19
Roy Tobias	New York City Ballet	22
Barbara Bocher	New York City Ballet	26
		September
Yvonne Mounsey	New York City Ballet	2
Sylvia Mason	National Ballet of Canada	4
Esteban Cerda	Dancing in Italy	5
Errol Addison	Sadler's Wells organisation	8
Constance Garfield	New York City Ballet	9
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Dancer you will know

As Pineapple Poll. Photo: Denis de Marney

PATRICIA COX

BORN in Edgware. Started to dance at the Sadler's Wells School in 1947. *Went into senior school in* 1953, *and made her stage debut dancing in* Der Fledermaus *at Sadler's Wells. Joined Theatre Ballet in the autumn of* 1954, *and became a listed soloist at the end of* 1955. *Married to Leslie White.*

Roles danced (*in London*): *Follies in* Coppelia; *Cygnet in* Swan Lake; *Peasant* pas de deux *in* Giselle; *Blue Girl in* Les Patineurs; *Poll in* Pineapple Poll; *Urchin in* Café des Sports; (*in Provinces*) Pas de Trois *in* Les Rendezvous.

I FIRST recall Patricia Cox as a very small very young little girl in *Coppelia*, leading the "Follies." She seemed to be a well-equipped dancer but with little individuality. During the re-organisation of the Theatre Ballet following the resignation of some of the leading dancers, she was entrusted with a few principal roles. I remember her, at the end of last year in Liverpool, dancing Pineapple Poll and a Blue Girl in *Les Patineurs*, performances that if anything confirmed that first impression of a lack of individual personality.

During the company's recent London season it soon became apparent that any such difficiency had been rectified, and she had developed the appeal and stage-craft of an experienced artist. Technically she is fairly strong. Yet it was her charm of manner and force of personality that won the London audience.

Her Poll, deliciously silly, is a completely valid interpretation that seems to owe nothing to her predecessors in the part. In the same way her Urchin in *Café des Sports* is equally original and full of the craziest humour. Some of the personal touches she has added, particularly in *Pineapple Poll*, show creative imagination, though perhaps she should watch carefully that she never oversteps the boundary line between an interpretation and a changed choreography. In her the Theatre Ballet has found a first-class comedienne, and it will be interesting to see how they use her abilities. Were the company ever to think of reviving *A Wedding Bouquet* (and someone ought to) she would be an inspired choice for Mary Honer's old part as the Bride.

Ballet re-awakens in Italy

by GIANNI CARANDENTE

The dance critic on the Roman daily newspaper, *Il Tempo*, and Inspector at the National Gallery of Modern Art in Rome, continues the story, started three months ago by Mario Porcile and Ugo Dell'Ara, of the gradual re-awakening interest in ballet in Italy. Next month, Carandente will write about the ballets by Aurel Milloss given in Rome.

BEFORE reporting to the readers of DANCE AND DANCERS what is going on in the Italian dance world, a few words might be helpful to provide an introduction to the present stage of things in this country.

Mario Porcile, director of the excellent International Festival of Nervi, and Ugo dell'Ara, principal male dancer and ballet master of the La Scala Theatre in Milan, have already briefly covered some of this ground in past issues of this magazine.

Italy, as everybody knows, has for too long severed herself from the life of modern ballet and forgotten her illustrious past tradition. First of all one should understand that the present state of things has really only begun to rectify this neglect. Too many difficulties prevent us from speaking of an Italian ballet as such, at least in any fully independent sense.

There are people in Italy who have understood the importance ballet has in any modern culture. Large audiences attend ballet performances (still vividly remembered are the successes enjoyed by the Sadler's Wells Company in Rome and by Marie Rambert's company in Bologna), a large part of the national Press dedicates space to the various aspects of our ballet problem, and so far two issues of a magazine called *Balletto* have come out and we fervently hope it will continue.

In Italy no permanent ballet company exists. There is, however, an institute that goes under the banner of "National Academy of Dance," headed by Jia Ruskaja (Russian for "I am Russian"). She is an exponent of Isadora Duncan's school, and notwithstanding the help she receives from many important people in various fields and from a Government subsidy, she has not produced anything particularly artistic. She mainly presides over girls from the debutante set, teaching them pseudo-Greek dances among the ruins of the beautiful ancient temples scattered along the peninsula. Men are excluded from her classes, as is academic dancing (i.e. traditional dancing). Not only that, but she is crusading against ballet, maintaining—as she did to none less than Massine—that a *pirouette* and an *entrechat* are mechanical things. According to her they are not art. Art is apparently the waving movements of young barefooted girls swathed in white veils. Moreover, since 1951, a law exists by which anyone wishing to teach dance in Italy is forced to undergo an examination before a committee of five, of which four belong to Ruskaja's academy and therefore acknowledge exclusively the "Greek" form, despising the traditional technique! A large movement is being built up to abolish this law and not only from among the parties involved. It will undoubtedly seem absurd to everybody that in a liberal country a Massine and a Balanchine must ask permission, in order to teach, from the local Academy of Dance with the Government's blessing.

MARKOVA IN MILAN: As Princess Aurora in Aurora's Wedding *at La Scala.*
Photo: Erio Piccagliani

Notwithstanding this paradoxical situation (in the country of Viganò, Taglioni and Cecchetti), ballet in recent years is enjoying a steady renaissance. And if only at the moment on one foot, so to speak, it is beginning to have enough authority to be able to ask the Italian Government to abolish this useless academy and to assist in the creation of a national ballet company. The art is also attracting an ever-increasing audience that is following its progress with interest which, in the important cities at least, will eventually bear substantial fruits.

In the struggle against stupidity and amateurishness, ballet has on its side the most notable and authoritative men of culture, and we are not too optimistic in hoping that soon the problem will be satisfactorily solved.

For the time being, ballets are performed during the opera seasons of lyric theatres with one, two or more programmes every year. Up to some three years ago music critics in the newspapers would devote all their space to reviewing the music, allotting only one or two lines to the choreography. Now this position has changed and writers on the dance are being assigned to write regularly for the daily papers.

With the end of the war many big foreign companies came to perform on Italian stages, the high quality of their ballets setting up for us a useful standard, as well as serving magnificently to re-awaken the interest of the public for this form of art. That which Italy had given to the world in the past she received back from the dancers of other countries carrying the torch of ancient tradition.

In the steps of Taglioni

AN effective resurgence in Rome is due to the return of choreographer Aurelio Milloss, as I shall describe next month.

At La Scala, Milan, performances always nowdays maintain a standard worthy of the great tradition of that theatre, both as regards their musical and choreographic execution. Just this year, at long last, Alicia Markova has, for the first time, danced on the La Scala stage, as I had dreamed of last year while writing about the memorable recital of this truly great artist at the Nervi Festival.

To this important event I want to dedicate a short note that I beg the readers to take as a modest homage I address in the name of Italy to the greatest heiress of Marie Taglioni.

On the evening of July 16, 1955, Alicia Markova was dancing in Italy for the second time. Her first appearance on the Italian stage was a long time ago—during the Diaghilev period—when as the little Nightingale in *Le Rossignol* she was beginning her illustrious career.

I will never forget the emotion of that night, last year in Nervi, in the big park of the Villa Groppallo, facing the Mediterranean, during the First International Ballet Festival sponsored by the City of Genoa. The immense blanket of night and the tops of the tall pine-trees formed the roof of the stage. While Markova was dancing the breeze fanned the branches and the delicate needles of the pines were falling on her like tears. In that green auditorium Alicia Markova was recreating for us the myth of Marie Taglioni.

This year Markova was invited to La Scala, where she danced Aurora in *Aurora's Wedding*, a role well-known everywhere. Therefore I will not relate to audiences so well acquainted with the incomparable poetry which emanates from her, things which are strictly pertinent to her interpretation. The great ballerina, deeply moved after her Italian triumph, expressed her pride to have danced in the land of Cecchetti, of her old maestro Vincenzo Celli, and of Pierina Legnani, Carlotta Grisi, Fanny Cerrito and Marie Taglioni.

In *Aurora's Wedding* her role is brief and over in a flash, almost like an apparition. When she was on stage (and I do not wish to sound unjust to the dancers of my country) she alone was the centre of interest, and a light emanated from her that obscured everything around.

When it was over and the stage was flooded with flowers, the gracious Markova seemed to fade, once more assuming her mortal form. The dream was dimming and reality taking over.

MARIO E IL MAGO
Mario and the Magician

First given by the Ballet of La Scala, Milan, on February 25, 1956. Ballet by Luchino Visconti from the story by Thomas Mann. Music by Franco Mannino. Choreography by Leonide Massine. Setting and costumes by Lila de Nobili.

CAST

Mario	JEAN BABILEE
Silvestra	LUCIANA NOVARO
Renato	UGO DELL'ARA
The Magician (*speaking part*)	SALVOR ANDONE

BASED on Thomas Mann's short story of the same name, *Mario and the Magician* had its première on the same night that Alicia Markova won her first triumph with the La Scala public. The film director Luchino Visconti, who as well as devising the scenario was also artistic director for the new ballet, showed that his brilliant flair as a theatrical producer could be applied with equal success to ballet.

Set in the period of the mid 'twenties, the action concerns a young waiter at a *café-concert* in a seaside town in Tuscany, who is in love with a beautiful young girl, the fiancée of another waiter, a boastful aggressive type. Mario, the disappointed lover, attempts to win the young girl's affection with the help of a

ANOTHER MAN'S FIANCÉE: Silvestra (Luciana Novaro), engaged to another waiter, is loved by Mario (Jean Babilée).
Photos: Erio Piccagliani

PUBLIC LOVE-MAKING: Silvestra in an amorous pas de deux *with her fiancée Renato, played by Ugo dell'Ara, is jealously watched by Mario.*

magician, who intensifies his desires by evoking for him the sensations of their fulfilment in visions and nightmares. When illusion fades into bitter reality and Mario discovers that the magician has been deceiving him, he kills him, thus avenging his shattered dreams.

Although, strictly speaking, the new work is more a mime drama than a ballet in the true sense of the word, it achieves the dignity and potency of ballet through the manner in which choreography and music are used to heighten the drama. The nightmare quality of Mann's story has been wonderfully translated into stage terms, with Franco Mannino's score closely following and speeding the development of the drama.

Massine's choreography unfolds in a magnificent series of stage spectacles, all highly effective, complete with ghostly apparitions, séances in which Oriental spirits are conjured up, nightmare visions of the protagonist, who flies across the scene on a bicycle, angels suspended on wires, and all the romantic paraphernalia of surrealistic hallucinations.

In all this Massine and Visconti have followed closely in the traditions of Manzotti's still famous spectacular ballet *Excelsior*, first produced at La Scala in 1881, while the decor and superb costumes of Lila de Nobili have all the bizarre, ironic elegance of the 1925 period.

There is, unhappily, one disruptive element in the ballet: the role of the magician has been given to a speaking actor, who explains the action in a logical, though exhaustingly discursive manner. Such a denial of gesture, the principal expressive medium of ballet, slows down the drama and interferes with the visual design. A ballet can convey literary ideas by translating them into symbolic terms, but it is a great mistake to attempt to preserve an author's statements intact and to interject them into the wordless language of the dance.

Perhaps Massine and Visconti thought this an original and modern treatment, but they should surely have realised that spoken declamation is alien to, and must inevitably destroy, the coherence and stylistic unity of a ballet.

It is impossible to imagine *Mario and the Magician* without Jean Babilée, who gave a striking performance as Mario. He created an unforgettable character—a present-day Romantic, a poetic dreamer whose ideals are untouched by sentimentality. Luciana Novaro and Ugo dell'Ara danced the two remaining principal roles with sure technique and intelligent artistry that made their interpretations among their finest achievements.

FANFARE (*continued from page 11*)

ballet on the company's last European tour, a number of people who have seen both versions have expressed to me their preference for the Danish version. Although the Danes get the right feeling for the choreography they also put a quality of characterisation into the comedy roles which I would have expected to have been beyond the range of City Ballet.

These comedy parts are all extremely well done, with the kind of broad, robust humour in which the Danes excel. Svend Erik Jensen staggering through the string section as the most unwieldy double bass in the world, Arne Melchert leading his brass squad, the irrepressible Bjørnsson as a big drum, and Mogens Hansen and Niels Kehlet as the oddly assorted pair of bassoons, all contrive to be very funny.

The rest of the dancing was also of a high level, and in Mona Hansen the company obviously have a girl of unusual talent.

Clive Barnes

DECOR

IT is unfortunate that the two ballets created specially for the Coronation night of Queen Elizabeth II should have been blessed with decor hardly worthy of the occasion. In London, Oliver Messel turned Ashton's *Homage to the Queen* into an insipid pastel vista; in New York, Irene Sharaff made Robbins's *Fanfare* into a Disneyland palace of incredibly crude design and colour.

The costumes and decor for the Royal Danish Ballet are apparently similar to the New York City Ballet production except that some "erminised" wings have been added.

Against a deep blue sky, the dancers, as various instruments of the orchestra and mainly in tangerine and yellow, run a visual course representing the function of each section of the average orchestra. The worst designing fault lies in a series of heavy bannered borders which inevitably draw the eye upwards and away from the dancing.

The idea of using dancers as musical instruments is, of course, not new and one recalls the great elegance of the designs by Berain for a fête in the 17th century. I also remember Serge Lifar in a ballet—*L'Orchestre en Liberté*—before the war in which the instrumental costumes were most ingenious.

Sharaff's idea of dancers as musical instruments seemed to be mainly confined to giving them a series of funny hats most of which made the wearers look either plain or just plumb silly. It says a great deal for the artistry of the Danish dancers that they mainly overcame this handicap.

It is possible that Sharaff was too obsessed with the music's original title—*The Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra*—and that she has seen the whole thing as a sort of childish charade. Nevertheless I still think that design through a child's eyes does not mean bad design. The high standard of children's art, as seen at recent exhibitions, and also the brilliant illustrations for many contemporary British and French children's books disproves this point. Anyway the main purpose of the ballet was to honour one of the most stately of post-war occasions and in this respect it can hardly be said to have been successful.

Peter Williams

IN LA SYLPHIDE: *Gerda Karstens' most amous role as the witch, Madge, who brings tragedy to the Scotsman, James.*

A Great Mime Retires

by Peter Williams

THE lives of those of us who love all that goes on in the theatre are punctuated by certain performances or performers who seem to have reached the pinnacle of their chosen art. The range of such peak moments can be very wide —from Chaliapine dying in *Boris Godunov* to the drolleries of Grock or Chaplin. In ballet such moments are achieved in the last mortal twitching of Pavlova as a swan dying or in the unbearable madness of Olga Spessivtzeva's Giselle. The careers of Markova, Fonteyn, Chauviré or Martha Graham have been studded with many such sublime moments.

We make these lists and they could go on for ever. As far as I am concerned, an artist who will always be high in my list will be that unique Danish mime—Gerda Karstens. It is possible that this lady has meant more to the British than she has in her own country. In Denmark they have a great tradition of mime and naturally such a player comes not so surprisingly to them. To us, where the fine theatrical mimetic art has somewhere got lost over the past quarter-century, such an artist came as a revelation.

Gerda Karstens made the usual progress through the hierarchy of the Royal Danish Ballet, and I do not gather that as a dancer she left any considerable impression. However, Anna Pavlova, on a visit to Copenhagen, told Karstens that she would be happy to take her into her itinerant company at any time she wished to join. But Miss Karstens preferred to remain in her native country, which was possibly just as well, because it is doubtful whether in the Pavlova company she would have been able to develop the side of her art which has brought her to the position she must inevitably hold in the minds of all who saw her.

Apart from Copenhagen, I suppose her triumphs have been in London, during the Royal Danish Ballet's all too brief season at Covent Garden in 1953, and in Edinburgh, where the company played during the 1955 Festival. These two visits and a few of minor importance away from Denmark, are all the outside world knew, will ever know, of an artist who had a range of roles as wide as our own great actress, Edith Evans.

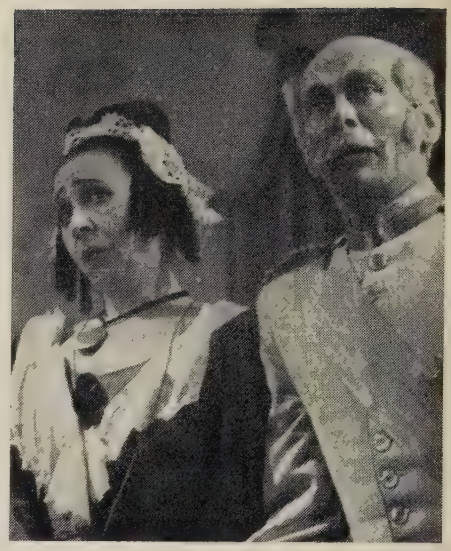
Most people when they think of her remember her as Madge in the Bournonville version of *La Sylphide*. This twisted, evil old creature who seemed to have materialised from a rag and bone heap was the very essence of midnight haggery. She was grotesque but never implausible. She was imbued with all the usual human failings, an excess of which must have brought her to the terrifying condition in which we see her. Her final triumph over the prostrate body of James is all the more chilling.

This Madge is possibly the ultimate depths to which another of Karsten's characters could sink—if things did not go too well for her; this role, diametrically opposite to the witch, is that of the Headmistress in *Graduation Ball*. Here she is a floppy, kindly person whom frustration has given a certain gaucherie—the inescapable female company usual in a girls' seminary has no doubt caused this. Somehow Karstens has here created a character that appears to be essentially Viennese.

Roles for artists of this kind do not abound in ballet, and invariably they are limited to mothers. Most of the principal characters in Romantic classical ballet seem to have a mother. Karstens has been responsible for quite a portrait gallery of them, specially notable being that in *Napoli* in which she was like one of those people always found in paintings of Neapolitan life; in *Kermessen in Bruges* when she was a jolly, full-blooded Breugel Flemish housewife; and in *Giselle*. In the latter she was outstanding. Starting off as a happy, bustling parent, mindful of her daughter's welfare, her complete collapse when Giselle dies was a piercing cry from the heart of every bereaved mother. I doubt if anyone else in our lifetime will give this role with such theatrical mastery.

These and so many other roles has Karstens encompassed in her years of service with the Royal Danish Ballet, roles ranging from comedy to melodrama, all perfectly interpreted in their differing ways. She has lifted traditional ballet mime from its rather stilted ballet grammar and made gesture the mirror of the soul and the condition of the mind of the character portrayed.

We got our final glimpse of her on stage curtseying low to her applauding King. Dressed as the Headmistress from *Graduation Ball*, in which she appeared for the last time on May 31, she realised the supreme honour in Denmark of taking a call, many calls, alone on the stage. She received many bouquets and several accolades from the orchestra—then the curtain fell. It is to be hoped that in her retirement she will still be able to pass on her noble art to the younger generation.



IN GRADUATION BALL: *As the Headmistress with Svend Erik Jensen as the General. This was the last role in which Karstens appeared on the stage.*

IN PARISIANA: *A lighter role in Bartholin's ballet.*

IN GISELLE: *As Berthe, Giselle's mother.*

IN FOLK LEGEND: *As Muri in Bournonville's Danish fairytale.*

IN PSYCHE: *An early role in Harald Lander's ballet of* 1934.

Violetta Elvin's Farewell

by David Hunt

ON Saturday, June 23, the final night of the Sadler's Wells Ballet's summer season at Covent Garden, Violetta Elvin danced Princess Aurora in the full-length *Sleeping Beauty* and retired from the stage, to marry and to make her home in Italy.

Although there was no mention in the programme, nor even on the posters outside the Opera House, that this was an important farewell performance, the charged atmosphere inside of tense concentration, punctuated by bursts of feverish applause, the strange aura of ineffable sadness that hung over the performance and which reached its greatest intensity in the gravely majestic *Apotheosis*, must surely have been apparent to even the most casual, uninitiated spectator.

For Elvin to relinquish her career in the fullness of her youth is an irreplaceable loss and a tragedy for connoisseurs of the classical dance, comparable in recent years only with the premature retirement of Irina Baronova.

Though no one could fail to be impressed by her striking beauty and by the warm-hearted, smiling radiance of her movement, Elvin has always been a "dancer's dancer," a ballerina whose purity of style must inevitably be underestimated by those who see brilliance in tricks, short-cuts and mannerisms, individuality in affectations.

Trained at the Bolshoi Ballet School in Moscow from the age of eight by teachers who included the daughter of Pavel Gerdt, Agrippina Vaganova, and Semenov, and after dancing with the Bolshoi Company for 18 months and later with the Stanislavsky Theatre for a short period, Elvin—then Violetta Prokhorova—came to England at the end of 1945.

Appearing first as a guest artist with Sadler's Wells, she has since danced all the leading ballerina roles in the classica repertoire, with the exception of *Coppelia*. In addition, she has also given proof of her wide range and versatility in such diverse roles as the Miller's Wife in *The Three Cornered Hat*, the female Tiresias, the Cossack Girl in *La Boutique Fantasque*, the Black Queen in *Checkmate* and the Firebird.

Yet it could hardly be said that her gifts have been fully exploited, for in the 10 years she has been with the company she has actually created only three roles of any importance—in *Ballabile*, the Queen of Water in *Homage to the Queen*, and La Favorita in *Veneziana*.

I personally would have wished for a last glimpse of her, not as the imperious Aurora, but as Odette-Odile or the Firebird, parts which, together with the Black Queen and Tiresias, were her own favourites.

Her Swan Queen was instinct with a tender Slav melancholy, a sustained lyrical intensity that took on infinite nuances of eloquence from the magical fluency of her matchless *port de bras*.

Her Firebird, a part I prefer to regard not as an ethereal, ghostly creature, was not compounded of pale moonlight and flickering shadow, but was a bird of flame, proud, and swift of flight. Elvin danced this role only four times. Considering that she is a ballerina who needs time to take the full measure of a part, for reasons no doubt connected with her Russian training and temperament, her performances were all the more remarkable. We can now only imagine the extent to which she might have further refined and developed her interpretation.

The professionalism and integrity of Elvin's artistry were never more clearly discernible than on this unforgettable, bitter-sweet final night. The joyousness and vivacity of her entrance as the youthful Aurora was boundless. The *Rose Adage* was given with superb control and assurance, and she was magnificently on balance in the final *attitude*, carrying it through to a triumphant *arabesque*, time seeming to stand still to allow its proud lines to be etched for ever on our memories.

In the Vision Scene one caught overtones of something more profound than of a prince pursuing a vision of his ideal. Elvin achieved here more than the traditional romantic abstraction, investing the choreography with her unique blend of modesty and voluptuousness.

Then the Wedding Scene, where, devotedly partnered by David Blair, Elvin seemed to bask in a golden glow of happiness, a winged victory of fulfilment. Yet every one of these broad-spanned, heroic movements also had a poignant, valedictory quality. Princess Aurora would marry her prince—and dance no more.

When it was over, a tumult of applause, banks of bouquets and the distant roar of thunder from the "gods." Then, taking a call by herself on the flower-decked stage, Elvin ran forward to gather some carnations thrown from the gallery and was knocked to the ground by the suddenly released curtain. A moment later she re-appeared, fortunately uninjured, though seeming a little disturbed by the accident.

In front of the full stage company, Dame Ninette de Valois graciously thanked her for her service to the Sadler's Wells Ballet. De Valois pointed out that she had brought to British ballet "the poise, the grace, and all the special qualities that belong to the Russian ballet" and that her example had had a great influence on "the younger generation of dancers in the company," expressing the hope that Violetta will always regard herself as a permanent member of the Sadler's Wells Ballet.

For those to whom her dancing in London for 10 years has meant so much, she always will be.

FINAL CALL: The last picture of Violetta Elvin as a ballerina, taking a curtain-call after her farewell performance. She has no plans for opening a ballet school, but says she may give lessons "if some youngster comes to me for my help." Photo: News of the World

FAREWELL PARTY: Margot Fonteyn and Violetta Elvin at the supper party in the Covent Garden crush bar after Fonteyn's performance in Le Lac des Cygnes *on June 13. As Fonteyn was flying to Paris next day, Elvin put forward the date of the party, which was to say goodbye to the ballet and members of the Opera House staff, so that Fonteyn could attend. Photo: Daily Express*

Music from Vienna and Spain

A Haydn Ballet

Haydn: Trumpet Concerto in E Flat. Harpsichord Concerto in D. George Eskdale (trumpet), Erna Heiller (harpsichord), Vienna State Opera Orchestra (Franz Litschauer). Vanguard PVL7012. 12in. 39*s.* 7½*d.*

IN 1950 George Balanchine called on the help of old Haydn to provide him with gay, youthful music to show off the lively talents of the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. Haydn, though long dead, cheerfully obliged, suggesting that he might use his Trumpet Concerto, but on the understanding that the ballet should so closely follow the fortunes of the music that without incongruity it too should be called *Trumpet Concerto*.

One of the composer's finest works, the concerto was written in 1796, not long after Haydn's return to Vienna after his triumphant second visit to England, and was his last purely orchestral composition.

The performance on this brilliantly engineered new recording has the benefit of the masterly playing of George Eskdale, an English trumpeter who by his zestful sponsorship of the work some years ago was largely responsible for rescuing it from neglect.

On the reverse is an equally joyous account of the Harpsichord Concerto, played with crisp attack and also extremely well recorded.

Strauss high-jinks

Johann and Josef Strauss: Waltzes, Polkas and Marches—*Persian March*; *Tales from the Vienna Woods*; *Hunting Polka*; *Village Swallows*; *Entrance March* from *The Gypsy Baron*; *Voices of Spring*; *Dot on the "I" Polka*; *Transmitted Polka*; *Emperor Waltz*. Vienna State Opera Orchestra (Anton Paulik). Vanguard PVL7007. 12in. 39*s.* 7½*d.*

OF the four waltzes, *Tales from the Vienna Woods* and the *Emperor* are among the finest of the younger Johann Strauss's "tone poems in waltz time" and have rightly been called masterpieces that are as much at home in the concert hall as ever they were in the ballroom. Brother Josef's captivating *Village Swallows* obviously migrated to Vienna via the Tyrol; while *Voices of Spring* has less attractive associations with the vocal antics of countless human "nightingales."

But what matters most on this record are the polkas and marches, played as they are with such tremendous *joie de vivre* and gusto that it is practically impossible to imagine more exhilarating performances. All are trifles—but what entertaining trifles when performed, as here, for all they are worth. The *Hunting* Polka, incidentally, is the source on which Dorati drew for the music for the *fouettés* competition in *Graduation Ball*.

MARTIAL SWAGGER: Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet, with Svetlana Beriosova and David Blair (centre), in Balanchine's Trumpet Concerto, *to music by Haydn with décor by Vivienne Kernot.*

Photo: Roger Wood

Paulik's vital approach produces similarly invigorating results in the waltzes, but the need here was for less ebullience and greater suavity of phrasing, particularly in the magically evocative introduction to *Tales from the Vienna Woods* which is made to sound more like the prelude to a gay Sunday afternoon romp.

NEW RECORDS
Reviewed by DAVID HUNT

All the same, I found the record acted on me like a tonic, and it is made all the more enjoyable by the crystal clarity and colourful richness of the reproduction. Perhaps we might be given next an LP devoted to the music of Johann *père* and of Josef Lanner.

Goya in sound

Granados: *Goyescas*. Amparo Iturbi (piano). HMV ALP1320 12in. 39*s.* 7½*d.*

FOR his two books of piano pieces to which he gave the title *Goyescas*, Granados took as his inspiration the paintings and tapestry designs of Goya, later using the music as the basis of his opera of the same name. The pieces, one or other of which occasionally turns up in Spanish ballet or dance recital programmes, have the following evocative titles: *Los requiebros* (*Flattery*), *Coloquio en la reja* (*Conversation at the window*), *El fandango del candil* (*Fandango by Candlelight*), *Quejas o la maja y el ruiseñor* (*The Maiden and the Nightingale*), *El amor y la muerte* (*Love and Death*), and *Epilogo—la serenata del espectro* (*Epilogue—The Spectre's Serenade*).

Also included on this record is another Goya piece, published separately—*El Pelele* (*The Straw Man*), the tapestry design on which it is based (reproduced on the attractive record sleeve) showing four girls tossing an effigy in a blanket, in the manner of *The Three-Cornered Hat*.

The Spanish pianist Amparo Iturbi, who, like her more famous brother, conductor and pianist Jose Iturbi, has lived for many years in America, plays the colourful music with impressive brilliance of technique, but in a disappointingly hard-hitting percussive manner that leaves little enough room for Granados's poetic sensibility to come through. The recorded piano tone is somewhat brittle and lacking in warmth, and I would be inclined to blame the pianist for this rather than the engineers.

Records for teachers

National Dances. Raymond Holder (piano), Roy Upton Holder (clarinet). HMV B10952-3. 2 10in. (78), 5*s.* 7*d.* each.

THESE folk dance arrangements have been recorded under the auspices of the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing and will doubtless be invaluable for students to practise to at home and for teachers who have to make do without a pianist.

The dances given are as follows. B10952: *Moleson* (Swiss), *Latovak* (Czech), *Neda Grivny* (Yugoslav), *Kalamatianos* (Greek). B10953: *Gymnaska* (Breton), *Tarantella* (Italian), *Daldans* (Swedish).

The rather ineffectual contribution of the clarinettist in the majority of the items could easily have been dispensed with, but the pianist has a fine rhythmic sense and that is all that really matters under the circumstances. Tempi for some of the dances, notably the *Tarantella* and *Kalamantianos*, are on the slow side, but this was no doubt dictated by teaching requirements. Like most folk music, the tunes have a haunting simplicity.

COVER STORIES

This month's front cover, by Maurice Seymour, is of Nora Kaye and Erik Bruhn in the *Black Swan pas de deux*. Both these stars of Ballet Theatre will appear with the company when it gives its next London season, starting on August 20, at Covent Garden.

NORA KAYE was born in New York. She studied at the Metropolitan Opera Ballet School and the School of American Ballet, her teachers including Michel Fokine. Fokine chose her to become a member of the *corps de ballet* for Ballet Theatre's first season in 1939. She rose to stardom when she created the role of Hagar in Tudor's *Pillar of Fire* and since then has danced a great number of dramatic and classical roles. As well as her performance in Tudor's *Jardin aux Lilas*, she has been most notable for her creation of the part of Lizzie Borden in de Mille's *Fall River Legend*. A few years ago she left Ballet Theatre to join New York City Ballet, and she also made very successful tours of the Orient, particularly Japan. Now she is back again with Ballet Theatre, the company which brought her fame and in which she has the repertoire most suited to her remarkable and varied talent.

ERIK BRUHN was born in Copenhagen and at the age of seven entered the school of the Royal Danish Ballet. He rose to become an extremely promising dancer, but shortly after the war he obtained leave of absence to join Metropolitan Ballet in England. Returning to the Royal Danish Ballet, he left temporarily on several occasions to dance with Ballet Theatre in America. His greatest success in that company was when he danced Albrecht to Markova's Giselle last year. Since then he has become the principal male dancer in Ballet Theatre, the position originally held by Igor Youskevitch. He is generally considered to be one of the finest male classical dancers of our time. He did the choreography for one ballet, *Concertette*, in Copenhagen, and also appeared in the film, *Hans Christian Andersen*.

SADLER'S WELLS BALLET

Fifield as Odette-Odile

THE Anniversary season recently ended at Covent Garden has been important for many reasons, not the least for the opportunities it has offered to some of the younger dancers. Elaine Fifield, who earlier this year had made her debut as Aurora in *The Sleeping Beauty*, on the afternoon of June 9 was seen for the first time as Odette-Odile in *The Swan Lake*. This proved to be the best thing she has yet done at Covent Garden, and seemed a striking improvement on the copy-book dullness of her first performances as Aurora.

Her Odette in the second act is well known from her days with the Theatre Ballet, although she had only danced it once before at the Opera House. Strangely enough this act was the least interesting of the three. Neatly danced and with a pleasing lack of affectation, there seemed insufficient character to her performance. Not only was her face immobile (for in certain circumstances that can be an acceptable interpretation of the role), but her dancing insufficiently conveyed or presaged the inherent tragedy of Odette.

With the change of plumage in Act Three came a change of heart. Her assured dancing was here intensely exciting and the wiles of the seductive Odile were imaginatively indicated without being over-emphasised. Her last-act Odette had the quality of emotional involvement I had previously missed in her work, and set the final seal on what amounted to a notable first performance.

A few months ago I wrote to the effect that in five years time or even less, David Blair should be a *premier danseur* with few equals in the Western world. My somewhat obvious prophecy was too guarded, what I had imagined would have taken years seems to have been achieved in the space of months. At this performance as Siegfried, Blair's partnering was impeccable, his acting and bearing had simple dignity, and his dancing in the third act was scintillating and impassioned. No one on our side of the Curtain, not even Bruhn whom I had seen in this *pas de deux* a few days previously, dances Siegfried with such controlled abandon. My one reservation about his performance is that he is still too democratic a Prince, but this is partly because of his youth and will sort itself out with time.

Clive Barnes

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET

Caviare from Macmillan

IT is a new departure for the Wells organisation to give evenings of ballet which consist of works by only one choreographer. Such spectacles are interesting to the connoisseur, but they can be rather dangerous to the reputation of the choreographer in question, because short ballets are often shown to better advantage when placed in juxtaposition to works by another choreographer.

Of the Macmillan evening on June 7 and 8, a member of the audience remarked that it was "like a huge helping of caviare—but then I like caviare." My own feelings were somewhat similar.

In programmes of this kind it is perhaps better to explain that the opening ballet, *Somnambulism*, was the first work that Macmillan mounted in public (the ballet is reviewed in full elsewhere in this issue), because then its faults would fall into their true perspective. Otherwise the audience has some justification for remarking, as I heard in the interval, that "American film musicals have done this kind of thing much better." An explanation would then have bridged the gap between this and the ballet that followed—Stravinsky's *Danses Concertantes* which was Macmillan's first commissioned work for a real ballet company. The development of Macmillan in this work is very obvious.

Of the original cast, only Donald Britton is the same in a principal role. His remains a

THEATRE BALLET STAR: Anne Heaton as the girl who is transformed into a bird in Macmillan's House of Birds.

Photo: Houston Rogers

splendidly bouncy and rather cheeky piece of dancing which I cannot imagine being given in anything like the same way by anybody else. Sara Neil, a greatly improved dancer, can perhaps never bring to the principal role what its creator, Maryon Lane, managed to achieve. Technically strong, Neil has rather spikey *port de bras* and she muffed the "spectacles" variation so that one never got the impression that she was wearing sun-glasses, which always struck me as being a most original touch. In the *pas de deux* she did not achieve the deep *pliés* in her supported *pirouettes* which were always such a striking feature of this dance. Yvonne Lakier, Bryan Lawrence and Yvonne English were good in the rather piquant *pas de trois*, and Donald MacLeary proved himself to be a very strong partner for Sara Neil.

The company as a whole danced this far from easy ballet very well and their improvement is very marked, since I last saw them in Liverpool and Southend. I still think that *Danses Concertantes* shows remarkable musical insight —the faults of Macmillan's choreography are mainly the faults of Stravinsky's score. I still wish that Macmillan could do a new version of Stravinsky's *Le Baiser de la Fée*. It would be as good for him to work on a score of this kind with a strong story as it would be for the repertoire of the company.

The light-hearted *Solitaire* (reviewed in full elsewhere) which followed made a good contrast though three comparatively plotless ballets in succession was getting to look something like a programme given by the New York City Ballet. The drama came finally with *House of Birds*.

New to this ballet, as far as I was concerned, were Bryan Lawrence and Anne Heaton as the lovers who get involved in the Bird Woman's aviary. Lawrence dances very well, but he should remember to keep his mouth closed. He brings a nice youthful feeling to the role. Heaton dances with the attack of a French dancer, which is good in a ballet nearest to the kind of work so often found in the repertoires of the best companies from France. She did not get that same touching anguish that Maryon Lane originally conveyed when she finds herself turned into a trapped bird, but she brought a sense of strong drama.

As always, Doreen Tempest made the Bird Woman into a very frightening creature. Her strong technique is used to its best possible advantage. The work as a whole remains as well danced as it has ever been, though some of the precise movements for the Enchanted Girls as birds were not as well defined as they used to be. A re-working of the final rather tea-time waltz and also of the costumes for the boys and girls, when disenchanted, would still be to the ballet's advantage.

An evening with Rodrigues

THE evening of Rodrigues' ballets on June 14 was not so successful. *Blood Wedding* could never be a very satisfactory opening ballet. An audience just arriving in a theatre, specially as early as it has to at the Wells, is in no mood to immediately consume such strong meat. A pity, because the principal roles were splendidly danced by Anne Heaton as the Bride and Donald Britton as Leonardo. More than anyone I have seen in this role, Heaton convinced me that she was perfectly capable of leaving her bridegroom on her wedding day to go off in the woods with someone else's husband. Heaton has really found herself in the Theatre Ballet's repertoire and she is bringing to British ballet something that, apart from some performances by Paula Hinton, it has so far lacked—an almost *grand guignol* sense of strong drama.

In a way I think that Britton is more suited to Leonardo than was David Poole who created it. Poole is possibly too sensitive, whereas Britton is tough right through and brings an earthy passion to his interpretation. Michael Boulton as the Bridegroom gave a well-defined characterisation, but he, on the other hand, needed to be more sensitive and to bring more refinement to the role. He might have been Britton's brother and this rather upset the balance of the story. These performances, together with Donald MacLeary as the Moon, obviated some of the ballet's many faults. Denis ApIvor's score is terribly noisy, Isabel Lambert's settings now look amateurish, and the pseudo-Spanish dances are an embarrassment. Such national dances should be authentic or completely stylised, these are neither one nor the other.

Although a number of changes have been made in *Saudades* since it was first given in Liverpool last winter, the changes have not been

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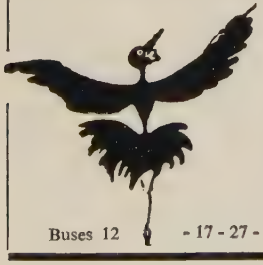

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enough to make it other than a limp near-Eastern salad. The story is a good one and yet none of its quality is realised in the ballet and some of the steps are banal in the extreme. ApIvor's score here seems formless and Norman Adams' designs indigestible—colour has to be piled on the stage with such meticulous care. Again it was the principal dancers who carried the work through. Brenda Boulton did all that was possible with the role of the Princess brought from the North to the dust and heat of Moorish Portugal. She has a fair innocence which reminded me very much of Patricia Miller and as far as the company is concerned, she makes a very good foil to the dusky dramatic intensity of Heaton. MacLeary was noble as the young King, though his make-up was a big exaggerated, and Margaret Hill brought as much fantasy as was possible to the role of the Sorceress. It is sad to have to admit though that this ballet will never make a very distinguished addition to the Wells repertoire.

After the masterly children's game of Macmillan, other works around this theme are bound to suffer and one of the first casualties is Rodrigues' *Café des Sports* which finished this programme. Today this light-hearted work seems rather trite, though it enshrined a performance that may be equally important to the career of Patricia Cox as this same role, that of the Urchin, originally was to the career of Maryon Lane. As the ragamuffin who gets involved in the artistic and sporting life of a Mediterranean village, Patricia Cox was a joy. She bubbled over with life and revealed an effervescent personality that carried the work through to a triumphant conclusion. Here it seems we have at last found the perfect soubrette, let us hope that she does not get carried away and want to perform strictly classical roles. Such talent as she has should be very carefully nurtured.

After the general re-shuffle last year, Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet started its last provincial tour at a pretty low ebb. They have pulled themselves together miraculously and much of this must be due to the work of the director, John Field, and the ballet master, Henry Legerton. Now that the company has found itself again, no effort should be spared to see that it keeps this way. A company can only survive if it builds up its personnel bit by bit; constant shuffling around spells eventual death, and ballet is not in such a strong position today that a company can die more than once. **P.W.**

KARSAVINA GIVES A CLASS: During the Sixth Annual Congress of the Federation of Russian Classical Ballet, Tamara Karsavina, who presided over the Congress, gave several classes at the School of Russian Ballet in Chelsea. *See also pages 5 and 27.* *Photo: Douglas Elston*

HUNGARIAN STATE DANCE COMPANY

FOLKLORE dance companies from middle Europe, on either side of the Iron Curtain, are getting me muddled. I find it difficult to know whether I am seeing Bulgarians, Jugoslavs, Rumanians, or what! They all seem to have a certain sameness about what they present and the way they are presented. What the Hungarian State Dance Company, which opened a six-week season at the Palace Theatre on June 2, has superior to all the others—is the music.

Always do I find the throb and trill of Hungarian music exhilarating, but when played and sung as on this occasion, it becomes tremendously exciting. I little thought that Liszt's Second Hungarian Rhapsody had anything further to offer me, yet played as it was by Istvan Albert and his orchestra with true Magyar blood coursing through every bar, I found myself caught up in a whirl of enthusiasm.

It was also a good idea to have the choir singing with the orchestra for many of the danced numbers, as it seems to give an added breadth to the dancing.

Nearly all the dances, like the Hungarian Czardas, started off slowly and then worked up to a lively finale. Exceptions to this practice were the *Bottle Dance*, from South Hungary, in which a troupe of girls, singing in rather strident voices, form into patterns and groups with wine-filled carafes on their heads—a spectacular feat of balance. *Dotting Dance*, from the region of the river Maros, showed four men dancing a kind of Morris Dance in complicated and interesting syncopated rhythm.

Of the group numbers by far the best was the final, *Wedding at Ecser*, which has been made into a film. In dance form it goes through all the ceremony usual at a peasant wedding. The bridegroom leaves his home with his groomsmen, the bride is seen making her preparations surrounded by her attendants, then the groom arrives and the ceremony and its attendant festivities begin.

The whole suite has been beautifully arranged by Miklos Rabai, and it seems to be one of the best ways of showing the life and dance art of any country. Particularly beautiful is the ceremony when the bride presents each of the groomsmen with a candle followed by a pairing-off of the boys and girls. It seemed to spring from deep primitive ritual.

The programme was well and slickly produced, the only pauses being while the singers and orchestra moved from the stage to the orchestra pit—a rather clumsy arrangement. It is also doubtful as to the advisability of having so many vocal numbers, excellent though they were, in a programme bound to attract mainly lovers of the dance; it is not easy to get acclimatised so quickly to the two separate art forms. In spite of the vitality of the whole performance, it is possibly the music that will give us the most lasting pleasure. **P.W.**

DANCE LECTURE

MADAME NADINE NICOLAEVA LEGAT ON THE NIJINSKY SYSTEM OF NOTATION.

Given at the Arts Theatre on June 3.

THIS lecture fell far below the standards already set by the British Dance Notation Society and it must certainly have been intensely frustrating for those who were present.

Unfortunately, Madame Legat has been working under a considerable handicap. Although she has Madame Romola Nijinsky's permission to consult the original manuscripts, her knowledge is not based on these but on a poor French translation.

The principles of the system are based on music. From the meagre amount of information given it was learnt that three horizontal staves, each of three lines, are used to represent the body, the legs and the arms. The body itself, it appears, is divided into 12 sections. Movements are to be written as notes of music—the ascending movements are sharps and the descending movements are flats. Moreover, shorthand abbreviations play an integral part in the system and when a certain stage has been reached modifications to simplify the symbols may be used.

Throughout, the actual explanations, repetitions and digressions allow Nijinsky room to discuss his artistic feelings and ideals. He believed that his system was to "confirm for good and all the creation of the choreographer and to help the rehearsal master, as well as the artists themselves." Once parts had been distributed to dancers who had studied this system, the choreographer would only need "to give the finishing touches when all is ready."

Nijinsky started work on his system in 1903 while still a student. He had been taught the Stepanov method, with which his own system has some similarities, but he believed it to be too primitive for the refinement of expression. Massine thinks that the Nijinsky method is very complicated. The fact that Madame Legat has worked on it for five years (intermittently, no doubt) and was unable to give more than the broad outlines gives some idea of its complexity. No one else has ever used the system and, as yet, Madame Legat is unable to record any movements by it.

Putting aside the spell still cast by Nijinsky's name, one could not help feeling that the system appeared extremely cumbersome, and most unlikely to be proved superior to any of the systems recently brought to our notice and so efficiently demonstrated. But it is interesting to learn that Nijinsky wrote down all his own ballets by this system as well as *Les Sylphides* and *Petrouchka*. His score of

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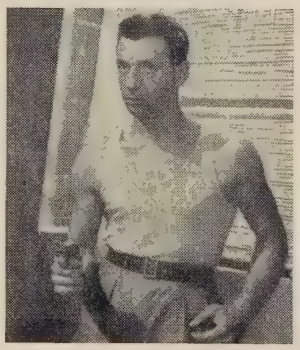

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L'Après-midi d'un Faune is now in the autograph manuscript collection of the British Museum.

Madame Rambert, who worked so closely with Vaslav Nijinsky, knows nothing of the mechanics of his system. However, when Nijinsky was leaving the company after the London season he was distributing photographs. He refused to give her one, but as a special gesture he offered to write down the first few bars of *L'Apres-midi d'un Faune* in his script for her instead. It was a promise he was unable to keep.

E. C. Mason

SPEAK UP!

Dance Notation at the Wells

SIR: I would like to draw your attention to a statement on the dust cover of the new edition of *Principals of Movement and Dance Notation* by Laban. It is to the effect that Labanotation is taught in the curriculum at the Sadler's Wells School and in the Sadler's Wells Company.

In point of fact, the question of including this work in our school was considered two years ago, but a series of circumstances made it impossible to carry the plan to its conclusion.

Since this matter was dropped, there has arisen a great deal of interest in notation in general, including a new form known as the Benesh System of Dance Notation. There is in the Upper School at Sadler's Wells a class studying the Benesh system of motation, but on a voluntary basis; it is not included in the general Junior School curriculum.

Time and the dancer alone will decide which of the existing notation methods will prove to be the most practical for the classical ballet to use. At the present stage, I am an onlooker: I feel sure that dancers are being offered unusual facilities, in many directions, to take up these various forms of notation-study. Some of these systems are in a position to state a claim of many years standing—but it is clear that sooner or later one particular system will have to obtain a more widespread hearing than has been the fortune of any of them to date.

NINETTE DE VALOIS

The Royal Opera House,
Covent Garden, London, W.C.2.

Dance and Dancers . . . ABROAD

FRANCE

THE XIMENEZ-VARGAS SPANISH BALLET

THE Théâtre de l'Etoile welcomed the Ximenez-Vargas Spanish Ballet, successors to Rosario and Iglesias, for a season beginning of June 1. This is less a company than a collection of a few soloists of real quality, formed in the finest of schools, that of Pilar Lopez, whose partners and pupils they each have been.

In spite of the mediocre musical accompaniment—due, perhaps, to the pitiful state of the pianos—and the illogical arrangement of the programme, in which Andalusian, Basque and South American numbers were mixed together, this programme, a near relation to a recital, had merits of its own. As well as the classically pure Ximenez and the flashing Vargas, we were impressed by the command and the supple and unusual slenderness of Ana Mercedes and Victoria Salcedo. I must also mention the warm voice of Fina Vivo, who, as well as her talent as a singer, possesses an unusual sense of *plastique*. The small *corps de ballet* played only a minor role.

The dancers revealed their qualities less in the Basque suite, which cannot be compared with those presented by Antonio and the Ballets Oldarra, than in the traditional *Cuadro Flamenco*. Ximenez performed Estampio's *Zapateado* in a simple cone of light, an astonishing display of mastery and also of remarkable restraint in a sphere where effects are generally overdone. He was joined by Manolo Vargas, Ana Mercedes and Victoria Salcedo in *Boleros del Burreao*, an elegant evocation of some of Goya's drawings. Finally, *Muneco Mexicano* gave the two male dancers and Victoria Salcedo the opportunity of revealing their gifts for comedy. From humour to ardent pride, such is the scope of expression of these original dancers.

THE ENGHIEN FESTIVAL

AS usual, the Casino d'Enghien reserved two gala evenings for the dance, June 14 and 15. Last year Jean Babilée's little masterpiece, *Balance à trois* had a particular triumph. This year Maurice Béjart and Leonide Massine share, unequally, the honours of the programme.

Assisted by Michèle Seigneuret, Tessa Beaumont and Anne-Marie Carrié, Maurice Béjart presented three works of widely differing types. With a naive set by a child of nine, Alain Berger, *Le Balayeur* takes its theme from a poem by Jacques Prévert. It tells of the adventures, or rather of the first amorous experiences of a young crossing sweeper, Maurice Béjart, helped by a horrified guardian angel, Milko Sparembroke. Anne-Marié Carrie brought humour to her portrayal of the desperate young girl.

NEW SPANISH STAR: Ana Mercedes, who recently scored a great personal success with the Ximenez-Vargas company in Paris.
Photo: Vallois

In strong contrast, *Tanit* conjures up, in a purple curtained arena designed by Jean Desvilles, the strange initiation rites of the Carthaginian goddess with two faces, played by Tessa Beaumont and Milko Sparembroke.

The third of these ballets, *Le Parfum de la Dame en Rouge*, is a 1925 version of the adventures of Rouletabille. Despite the merits of the dances and a few inventive moments in the choreography, which is for the most part acrobatic, none of these ballets is really in the top class. The choice of somewhat mediocre scores by Louis Bessière, Maurice Ohana and Gérard Calvi, was no doubt partly responsible for the programme's lack of quality. After *La Symphonie pour un homme seul*, the public had the right to expect great things of Maurice Béjart. Praise must be accorded, however, to Tessa Beaumont's beauty and Michele Seigneuret's undeniable stage presence.

Ending the programme, *Divertimento*, arranged by Massine to Mozart, had the advantage of a strong cast—Claude Bessy, Peter Van Dijk, Francine Collement, Jacqueline Rayet, Raoul Bari, Duflot and Franchetti, all from the Opéra. Conceived in a graceful and happy vein, this plotless *divertissement* seemed very classical and a little ordinary. Although the mastery of the choreographer and of the dancers was beyond dispute, the ballet suffered a little from the haste with which it had been staged and the small dimensions of the stage in which a local and too unsure *corps de ballet* had to manoeuvre.

A few passages remain in the memory: the *adage* for Bessy and Van Dijk, whose dignified elegance suits the powdered graces of the 18th century, and charming costumes—their designer was not named—in muslin of pastel shades and white satin.

ARGENTINA CELEBRATED

ON June 19 an exhibition devoted to Argentina was opened at the Paris Opéra Museum. Organised on the suggestion of Edouard Beaudu and arranged by M. Carlhian, it includes some precious relics and souvenirs lent by collectors, admirers and friends of the great Spanish dancer. Among innumerable photographs and various touching souvenirs, There was the fine portrait of Manuel de Falla by Zuloaga, sketches by Mariano Andreu, the working score with manuscript notes of *L'Amour Sorcier*, and the well-known portrait by Jacovlev of Argentina herself. A careful reconstruction of her dressing-room gave an authentic and moving idea of her astonishing career.

On June 20, the twentieth anniversary of her death, tribute was paid to her memory in the Paris Opéra Library. Speeches were made by M. Michon, the Keeper, M. Rivollet, and Georges Wague, President of the Friends of Argentina and her former partner. Mme Carmen Perez, who was for many years her accompanist, played music by Albeniz and, with Hélène Bouvier, de Falla to a record of Argentina playing the castanets.

Marie-Françoise Christout

AMERICA

Ballet Theatre Workshop

ONE of the most distinguished dance audiences of the season jammed the Phoenix Theatre for the four Ballet Theatre Workshop productions that were given a one-evening showing during early May. For a good many, as a matter of fact, there was more performing spirit and certainly more excitement in the audience than there was during Ballet Theatre's recent season at the Met.

The biggest hit of the evening was Robert Joffrey's *Pas Des Déesses*, which this choreographer staged last spring for Ballet Rambert in London. Here it was given a superb performance with Lupe Serrano as Taglioni, Ruth Ann Koesun as Grahn, Sonia Arova as Cerito and Erik Bruhn as Saint-Léon. Joffrey was also represented by *Workout*, to music by Robert McBride. This gay romp, composed in three sections, opened with a vivacious prelude, followed by a quiet series of three duets and with a fast conclusion. All of it was fresh, creative and distinctive and the students from the Ballet Theatre School gave it a rousing performance.

Though the New York daily newspaper dance press were most enthusiastic about these two works by Robert Joffrey, I found Job Sanders' new ballet, *Streetcorner Royalty*, the most exciting work on the programme. Though over-long, this biting and savage study of teenage delinquents, set to a jazz score by Jack Montrose, vividly depicted the aggressiveness and nervous tension of a group of potential gangsters. There was sharpness and substance in the choreography and the movement was full of nervous rhythms and dynamic changes. All 10 of the young male dancers, who were at student level, gave a most compelling performance.

The most disappointing work on the programme was *The Enchanted*, choreographed by Katherine Litz and adapted from the play by Jean Giroudoux. Combining passages of ballet, modern dance and the spoken word, this work never became a unity. However, it must be added that James Mitchell and Gemze de Lappe did all in their power to infuse this work with meaning and both gave admirable performances with the material at hand. The evening opened with a charming group work, *Continuum*, to music by Mozart. The young group of 14 dancers gave a fresh and spirited performance to this pleasantly agreeable abstract ballet composed by Harry Asmus.

After viewing this performance I wondered why a similar excitement and satisfaction could not be possible with Ballet Theatre's own programmes during a season. Certainly here is proof, and abundantly, that there are at least two extremely promising choreographers at hand and certainly there is no shortage of up-and-coming dance talent. It would indeed be both pleasant and rewarding if some of this interest could be transferred to the company itself.

New Broadway Musicals

FRANK LOESSER'S *The Most Happy Fella*, the musical version of Sidney Howard's Pulitzer Prize-winning *They Knew What They Wanted*, is the biggest musical hit next to *My Fair Lady* in New York. A roaring hit since opening night, it is chiefly a folk-opera rather than a musical comedy. However, it has several interludes of folk-dance, set in the wine-growing Californian countryside, that have been choreographed by Dania Krupska, that give it added flavour and vitality.

The Littlest Revue, an intimate musical revue with a cast of eight singers and dancers, has been one of the early summer pleasures in New York. Choreographed by Charles Weidman, a charming calypso dance, *I Lost the Rhythm* and *Opus 9*, a Dali-esque solo for Dorothy Jarnac, are particularly noteworthy. In this latter Jarnac dances in a picture-frame setting abetted by moving hands that come through the floor and the sides of the picture. Then there is also *Game of Dance*, fleetingly performed by a trio that consists of Beverley Bozeman, George Marcy and Tommy Morton.

Since the last issue, the *Ziegfeld Follies*, starring Tallulah Bankhead and with choreography by Jack Cole, has closed down out of town before its New York première with an estimated loss of $485,000. The musical version of *Lost Horizons* (*Shangri-La*) has also been having book and casting changes and its New York opening has been again delayed so that it cannot be reported on until next month.

NEWS of Dance and Dancers in America. At the close of the Ballet Theatre season, Rosella Hightower flew to Spain for guest appearances with the Marquis de Cuevas Ballet. . . . Antony Tudor and Hugh Laing have gone to Tokyo, as reported previously, but Nora Kaye has remained behind and is joining forces with John Kriza and some of the *corps* of Ballet Theatre for a tour of the summer theatre circuit. . . . John Heawood is staging the dances and musical numbers for *Sticks and Stones*, the new revue starring Hermione Gingold that is having its pre-New York try-out performances in the summer theatres. Heawood is also responsible for the staging of the night club revue, *Four Below*, which is currently so popular at the new Downstairs Club in New York. . . . David Thimar and Peter Conlow are in charge of the choreography for *New Faces of* 1956, the revue soon to open in New York. . . . Ruth St. Denis has come East to New York, from California, for the filming in colour and sound of three of her now historic solo dances: *Cobra*, *White Jade* and *Black and Gold Sari*. . . . José Limón is choreographing a new dance work based on Eugene O'Neill's *The Emperor Jones*, to music by Heitor Villa-Lobos, the noted Brazilian composer, that is to have its world première this month at the Empire State Music Festival.

Arthur Todd

Ballet Dates

FESTIVAL BALLET
at the Royal Festival Hall, London

July
17-21 *Scheherazade, Homage to a Princess, Napoli*
23-25 *Swan Lake* (Act 2), *The Nutcracker*
26-28 *Scheherazade, Homage to a Princess, Etudes*
July 30-Aug. 1 *Grand Divertissement* (*La Esmeralda*), *Les Deux Errants* (London première), *Le Spectre de la Rose, Prince Igor*
2-4 *Swan Lake* (Act 2), *Les Deux Errants, Le Spectre de la Rose, Prince Igor*
6-8 *Swan Lake* (Act 2), *The Nutcracker*
9-11 *Les Sylphides, Etudes, Petrouchka*
Programmes until Sept. 8 to be announced
Evenings 8 p.m.; Wed., Sat. matinees 2.30 p.m.

AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE
at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

Aug.
20-22 *Les Sylphides, Fall River Legend, Black Swan pas de deux, Fancy Free*
23-25 *Giselle, Interplay*
27-29 *Swan Lake* Act 2, *Billy the Kid, Offenbach in the Underworld*
30-31 *Theme and Variations, Streetcar Named Desire, Don Quixote pas de deux, Rodeo*
Sept.
1 (M) *Theme and Variations, The Combat, Black Swan pas de deux, Rodeo*
I (E) *Theme and Variations, Streetcar Named Desire, Don Quixote pas de deux, Rodeo*
Evenings, 7.30 p.m. Sat. mats., 2.30 p.m.

BALLETS AFRICAINS
at the Palace Theatre, London

Aug. 7 to 25. Keita Fodeba's company of dancers and singers direct from Africa.

SOVIET ARMY ENSEMBLE
at the Empress Hall, London

June 28 for eight weeks.
Company of 200 Singers, Dancers and Musicians of the Soviet Army straight from Russia.

SADLER'S WELLS BALLET
at the Edinburgh Festival, the Empire Theatre

Aug.
20 *Noctambules, Birthday Offering, The Lady and the Fool*
21 *Noctambules, Birthday Offering, The Lady and the Fool*
22 (M & E) *Noctambules, Birthday Offering, The Lady and the Fool*
23, 24, 25 (M & E) *Coppelia*
27 *Les Sylphides, The Miraculous Mandarin* (première), *Homage to the Queen*
28 *Les Sylphides, The Miraculous Mandarin, Homage to the Queen*
29 (M) *Les Sylphides, Coppelia* Act 3, *Homage to the Queen*
29 (E) *Les Sylphides, The Miraculous Mandarin, Homage to the Queen*
30, 31, Sept. 1 (M & E) *Le Lac des Cygnes*
Sept.
4-29 The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden (the season will include the London première of Rodrigues' *The Miraculous Mandarin* and the world première of Cranko's *The Prince of the Pagodas*)

SADLER'S WELLS THEATRE BALLET

Aug.
20 Santander Festival, Spain

BALLET RAMBERT
Spanish Tour

July
24 Valencia
31 Vigo
Aug.
4 Gijon
9 Cadiz
14 Huelva
17 Jaen

RAM GOPAL INDIAN BALLET
at the Edinburgh Festival, the Empire Theatre

Aug.
3, 4, 5 (M & E) Programme of Indian dances
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